AN

EXPOSITION

OF THE

NEW TESTAMENT.

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NEW TESTAMENT;

INTENDED AS AN

INTRODUCTION

TO

The STUDY of the SCRIPTURES,

BY

Pointing out the LEADING SENSE, and CONNECTION

OF THE

SACRED WRITERS.

By WILLIAM GILPIN, M. A.

PREBENDARY OF SALISBURY, AND VICAR OF BOLDRE, IN NEW-FOREST, NEAR LYMINGTON.

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TO

The STUDY of the SCRIPTURES,

BY

Pointing to the LEADING SENSE and CONNECTION

OF THE

LITERAL WRITERS.

BY JOHN LEWIS, M.A.

VICAR OF ALCESTER.

LONDON:

[illegible]

1822.

TO THE

HONORABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND

THE

LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY.

My Lord,

AMONG the many expoſitions of the ſcriptures, I know none of the kind I now offer, under your Lordſhip's patronage, to the public. You exactly hit my idea, when you called it a *readable* one—in oppoſition, I ſuppoſe, to the generality of expoſitions, which are too diffuſe to be *read* with eaſe—tho much fitter to be *conſulted*, than mine.

Tho I have not the preſumption, my Lord, to ſuppoſe that mine can be of much uſe to the profeſſed ſcholar; yet I am willing to flatter myſelf,

myſelf, it may be of ſome aſſiſtance to two claſſes of people——to the younger ſtudents in divinity, as an introduction to the ſcriptures——and to thoſe, whoſe engagements in the world, or neceſſary buſineſs, may prevent their making deeper reſearches.

Your Lordſhip knows how many years I have employed upon this work; and how long it hath lain by me: and yet, tho I hope I have neither been deficient in reading, in thinking, nor in conſulting my friends on the ſubject, I ſtill, my Lord, bring it forward with apprehenſion. Nothing is more arduous, than to comment on the ſcriptures——to *publiſh* our *own interpretations* of the *word of God.* In many places we *muſt conjecture;* and there will ever be a variety of opinions. I humbly however truſt in God, that I have hazarded no conjecture, nor have given any explication of obſcure points, inconſiſtent with the *general ſenſe* of ſcripture, which *muſt* be our *guide* in all *dubious paſſages.*

Your

Your Lordſhip's approbation of my work is one of the beſt grounds of my hope, that it may in ſome meaſure anſwer the ends I propoſe. I am, my Lord, with the greateſt reſpect,

Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient,

And obliged, humble Servant,

WILLIAM GILPIN.

Vicar's Hill,
April 12th, 1790.

GENERAL PREFACE.

AT the time of Jeſus Chriſt's birth, the whole world enjoyed profound peace. The ſovereignty of Rome, under Auguſtus Cæſar, had united, and in a degree civilized, almoſt all the known nations of the earth. This indeed may be conſidered as one of thoſe modes of preparation, which God had provided for the reception of the goſpel. The ſeveral parts of the empire were not only rendered more acceſſible to it; but were better diſpoſed to receive it. The age was more inlightened: impoſtures were more eaſily detected; and the evidences of that religion, which wiſhed for the cleareſt light, were produced with greater force.

Among other nations, the Jews fell under the government of the Romans. They felt, like the reſt of the conquered provinces, the avarice and exactions of pretors, and publicans; but on the whole, they were humanely treated. They were ſuffered to live under their own laws, with a few reſtrictions; and their religion was left inviolate. The high prieſt exerciſed his office; and the Sanadrim, in a great degree their power. It is true indeed, the emperor ſometimes interfered in the promotion of theſe rulers: yet ſtill their functions went regularly on.

In the mean time, the nation became exceedingly corrupt. The Babyloniſh captivity, which had been the puniſhment of their idolatry, had effectually rooted out that crime. But they had adopted others. The ſpirit of their religion was gone: and tho the form of it remained; yet ſome rites of Babyloniſh, Egyptian, Syriac, and Arabic origin, had in ſome degree polluted the purity of the Moſaic ritual. Their morals too were much infected. Roman luxuries, and Roman vices had found their way into Judea, and had greatly corrupted the people at large; but

chiefly in the vicinity of Herod, who was proud of adopting the licentious manners of his conquerors †.

The learning of the Jews in our Saviour's time consisted almost intirely in the glosses, and interpretations of their rabbies upon the law. This licence in religion was in an earlier period unknown. The old Jewish seer, or prophet, who was inabled to work miracles in proof of his divine commission, was the sole interpreter of scripture. He recorded all events both civil and ecclesiastical. He warned the disobedient of the judgments of God; and reproved both kings, and people. Under this high authority, all licentious opinions were restrained; and the Jewish church was unacquainted with schism.

After Malachi, who was the last prophet, and lived about four hundred years before Christ, the Jewish church by degrees divided into different sects. Of these the most remarkable, both in themselves, and as they so frequently occur in scripture, were the Pharisees, and Sadduces.

The hypocritical character of the Pharisee is well known; his solemn deportment; his parade of religion; his pride, and contemptuous behaviour; his strictness in trifles; his licence in matters of importance. It was his grand tenet, that tradition was equal to the law; and was given by God to Moses, as a supplement to the pentateuch. From this fund he imposed various observances on the people, which contributed more than any thing else to destroy the genuine spirit of their religion. After our Saviour's time these traditionary ordinances were collected, and became the Misna, and the Talmud. These books, tho very corrupt commentaries on the Jewish law, have however been of great use among christians, as they throw various lights upon the customs, and proverbial phrases of the Jews; and make the scriptures better understood.

The Sadducee was a Jewish freethinker. He denied a future state; and *believed neither angel, nor spirit*. As he acknowledged however the pentateuch, in which he found many narratives of angels, it is difficult to account for his disbelief of these heavenly beings; unless he supposed

† See an account of the corrupt state of Judea at this time, in Lardn. Credib. P. I. B. I.

them

them to be a ſort of temporary phantoms, raiſed merely to ſerve particular ends.

In oppoſition to theſe latitudinarians, another Jewiſh ſect ran into an oppoſite extreme. Theſe were the Eſſenes, who carried their religious ſeverities to a great height. As they lived chiefly in remote parts, they were little known. Their name is not mentioned in ſcripture; tho it is ſuppoſed they are alluded to in ſome paſſages; particularly by St. Paul, in his epiſtle to the Coloſſians†.

Some few however there were, who with rational piety ſtill endeavoured to preſerve the purity of ſcripture; allowing no arbitrary interpretation, and diſavowing tradition. Among theſe, we may ſuppoſe, were Simeon, Nicodemus, Joſeph of Arimathea; and indeed all, who read the prophetic writings without prejudice, and acknowledged Jeſus to be the Meſſiah.

The great truth of an expected Meſſiah, was what all ſects univerſally agreed in believing. But while it filled the true interpreter of ſcripture with holy joy, and pious hope, it had a very different effect upon the body of the Jewiſh nation. Notwithſtanding the gentle treatment they had received from the Romans, they bore the yoke with impatience. They were not actuated by a ſpirit of civil liberty, as other nations commonly were: but by a kind of ſpiritual pride. They were the deſcendants of Abraham; and conceiving themſelves to be a free people, they never loſt the hope, from a full dependence on the predictions of their prophets, of recovering their liberty. It is true, their prophetic deliverer was ſtrongly marked with characters which could not poſſibly accord with a temporal prince. He was held out indeed as their Redeemer from bondage: and tho it appeared plain to the attentive interpreter, that this bondage was of a ſpiritual nature; yet the nation in general overlooking the humiliating circumſtances of theſe deſcriptions, applied only the ſplendid, and triumphal parts to their expected deliverer: and rejected Chriſt, as he did not anſwer *their* ideas of a Meſſiah. At the ſame time they were continually breaking out into rebellions through the deceptions of *falſe Chriſts and falſe prophets*; and thus held out in their belief of pro-

† See chap. ii, 23.

phecies, which never could be fulfilled, but in Jefus Chrift, a very convincing proof that he was the real Meffiah.

That a general expectation of a Meffiah fhould prevail in Judea, is not furprizing; as the prophetic intimations of this great event were fo clear, and fo precife. But it is fomewhat fingular, that the fame idea fhould be found among heathen nations; as it certainly was, about the time of our Saviour's appearance. Suetonius*, and Tacitus † both fpeak of a king, that was expected to arife out of Judea at that period. The Pollio of Virgil alfo is a poem of a very peculiar character. It abounds with evangelical traces, through whatever means the poet became poffeffed of them. But Plato prefents us with paffages ftill more furprizing. He tells us *a divine revelation is neceffary, to explain the true worfhip of God—to add authority to moral precepts—to affift our beft endeavours in a virtuous courfe—to fix the future rewards, and punifhments of virtuous, and vicious conduct—and to point out fome acceptable expiation for fin*‡. In fome paffages he comes even yet clofer to chriftianity. In one place he introduces Socrates telling Alcibiades, that, *in future time a divine Perfon fhould appear, who in pure love to mankind fhould remove all darknefs from his mind; and inftruct him how to offer his prayers, and praifes in the moft acceptable way to the divine Being.*§ And in another place he introduces the fame philofopher giving the following account of this divine teacher. *With all his illuftrious qualities,* fays he, *mankind will not fubmit to him. Nay they will ufe him with every indignity. He fhall be fcourged; tormented; his eyes burnt out; and at length, after every inftance of contumely, he fhall be put to death.* ||

There can be little doubt, I think, but that all thefe intimations from heathen writers muft have originated from the Jewifh fcriptures; which we have reafon to believe were open to the learned inquiries of

* Vit. Vefp. cap. iv.

† Hift. lib. v.

‡ See a fuller collection of fimilar paffages in Blackwell's fac. Claffics. Vol. II. p. 88.

§ Alcib. II. p. 150.

|| Plato ufes the word ἀναχιδιλευθήσεται, which fome good lexicons render *crucified.* See Plat. de Repub. p. 361.

thofe

thoſe days. The Jewiſh nation was certainly the great mean, which Providence made uſe of to prepare the world for the reception of chriſtianity. The grandeur of their temple—the ſplendor of their religious rites; and the great renown of their lawgiver—all conſpired to draw the attention of learned foreigners: while their travels; their wars, both ſuccesful, and unſuccesful; their commerce; and above all, their captivities, tended to diſſeminate through the means of their ſcriptures, thoſe high expectations which their prophets had raiſed.——If we do not ſuppoſe all this, we are puzzled to gueſs, whence theſe heathen authors draw intimations of ſo extraordinary a kind: we muſt at leaſt believe, with regard to Plato in particular, that his reaſon led him to ſee thoſe great defects in the nature of man, which the goſpel was intended to reform.

But whatever hopes the heathen world might entertain on this head, the birth of Chriſt compleatly fulfilled the whole Jewiſh diſpenſation. It threw a new ſplendor on the law, and on the wiſdom of the lawgiver. The Levitical ceremonies, which on the face of them appeared ſo ſingular, and unintelligible; aſſumed perſpicuity, propriety, and beauty; when it was found, that as types they figured out a more explicit revelation of God's will; and that the great ſcheme of the redemption of man might almoſt palpably be traced through every one of them. On the other hand, the goſpel ſhone with a much fuller blaze of evidence; when it appeared, that the life, the death, and the office of the Meſſiah had not only been predicted by the prophets of the Old Teſtament; but had been portrayed, as it were, and viſibly repreſented, by the rites of the oldeſt religion on the face of the earth; and the only religion, which bore the ſtamp of a divine inſtitution.

According to the whole tenor of prophecy, Jeſus Chriſt was born in the loweſt ſtation; tho of the family of David. Bethlehem was the place of his birth; but his chief abode was Nazareth, where he continued in obſcurity, till the thirtieth year of his age.—About that time John the baptiſt, who had been miraculouſly born, appeared in the office of forerunner to the Meſſiah; calling men to repent, and prepare themſelves for the goſpel.

When John's miniſtry ceaſed, that of Jeſus commenced. His firſt buſineſs was to chuſe diſciples; to aſſiſt him to preach the goſpel; to propagate it after his death; and chiefly to be witneſſes of his life, and

reſurrection.

resurrection. He chose them from the lowest stations; and had no respect to the abilities of the mind; but to the sincerity of the disposition. He particularly avoided persons endowed with human learning; least the gospel should be attributed to natural causes*.—Thus accompanied, he preached the gospel through Judea, during the space of three years; and confirmed the truth of it by miracles.

The religion he taught, was very plain: however it hath often been wrought by the inventions of man, into a complex, and mysterious institution. It was founded on the lost condition of mankind; and their utter inability of restoring themselves to God's favour. Faith in him as their Saviour, and lawgiver, was the first condition he required; and that men might not believe without a sufficient ground for their faith, he appealed to the prophecies, he fulfilled; the miracles he performed; and the holy doctrines he taught.—As the fruits of faith, he expected men to repent of their sins, and lead holy lives; thus restoring themselves, through God's grace, (which was promised to their prayers, and endeavours) to that purity of heart, which they had lost. These were the plain conditions of the gospel: and on the performance of them he promised them the pardon of their sins through his death; and a restoration to that everlasting happiness, which their first father had forfeited.—He did not however openly profess himself the Messiah, even to his own disciples; at least not till towards the conclusion of his ministry. Their prejudices were yet too strong to bear the truth. The idea of *a crucified Redeemer* was still beyond their conception. He expressed himself therefore indirectly on this head; but yet with such perspicuity, that after his resurrection, and ascension, his disciples remembring what he had said, received it as full conviction. ——On many occasions also he used the parabolic manner of teaching; which was indeed the common vehicle of knowledge in the east. The talmudical writings are full of it. The *precepts* of the gospel our Lord renders sufficiently plain; tho he sometimes inforces them by a parable. But the chief use he makes of this mode of instruction, is in describing the future progress of his kingdom, and it's reception in the world. These

* 1 Cor. i. 26, 27.

notices

notices the ill-diſpoſed could not miſapply; while the believer afterwards ſeeing them compleatly fulfilled, (as parables of this kind have a prophetic caſt) was confirmed in his faith.

The preaching, and miracles of Jeſus had their due effect on the ſimplicity of the common people, who attended him in great numbers; tho many of them probably under the expectation of a temporal deliverance; which he always however endeavoured to repreſs. The Jewiſh rulers, in the mean time, could not bear the idea of a religion, which was intended to ſuperſede the Levitical law; and to introduce all the nations of the earth to the ſame degree of favour with God; which the Jews had arrogantly appropriated to themſelves. But the character of Jeſus was ſo popular, that his enemies were obliged to act with great caution. Having at length however obtained a favourable opportunity of ſeizing him privately, through the treachery of one of his diſciples, they accuſed him to the Roman governor; and had influence enough to procure his condemnation. On the third day after his death he aroſe from the dead, and appeared to many people. We have an account of his appearing to more than *five hundred perſons at one time**. But his apoſtles were the only perſons, whom he appointed as his *choſen witneſſes*†, to atteſt and record this great truth to the world. He continued with his diſciples on earth only a ſhort time after his reſurrection, and then aſcended finally into heaven.

After theſe great events, the diſciples, under the influence of the Holy Ghoſt, with which they were powerfully endowed, ſpread the goſpel through various parts of the world. It had hitherto been confined to Judea: but the prophecies which foretold the call of the Gentiles, began now to be fulfilled.——The next ſtep, they took was to provide for the future ſtate of the church, by writing faithful narratives of the life, and doctrines of their Maſter. The doctrines are not drawn out in ſyſtematic form; but blended with the life of their divine Author; and calculated,

* 1 Cor. xv. 6.

† Acts x. 41.

not

not ſo much to exerciſe the underſtanding, as to impreſs the heart.—The epiſtles took their origin from the errors of the times. While the Jewiſh church was governed by prophets, who had the whole under their eye, licentious opinions, as we obſerved, were eaſily reſtrained. But this order could not ſubſiſt in the chriſtian church, which was infinitely diſperſed. It pleaſed the divine Providence therefore to leave it, after it's firſt eſtabliſhment, to it's own native force, and evidence. Well-diſpoſed perſons had all the means they could deſire of being acquainted with the truth: but it was ſoon found, that ill-diſpoſed perſons began to mix their prejudices, and private views with the ſimplicity, and purity of the goſpel. We meet with many traces of this undue mixture even in apoſtolical times. The opinions of Simon Magus—of the Nicolaitanes—of Hymeneus, and Philetus, were all of this kind. But the wrong opinions, which were the moſt prevalent in the early church, were thoſe of judaizing chriſtians. A numerous body of theſe, in all parts, being ſtill zealous for the Levitical law, blended their Jewiſh ideas with chriſtianity; placing circumciſion on the ſame footing with faith in Chriſt, and good works.

To obviate theſe, and other licentious opinions, the apoſtles therefore, and eſpecially St. Paul, wrote their ſeveral epiſtles. The primary occaſion it is true, of moſt of theſe epiſtles, was to oppoſe the erroneous opinions, which prevailed in the different churches to which they were written: but ſtill they were intended to be of uſe to future chriſtians by giving them juſt ideas of chriſtianity. And indeed many of the erroneous opinions of later times are very ſimilar to thoſe of ancient date.

The ſtile of theſe ſacred writings is in general plain, and unadorned. The narratives particularly are drawn up with wonderful ſimplicity. The ſame artleſs character, which marks the lives of the writers, diſtinguiſhes alſo their writings. Numerous inſtances indeed we find of ſtrong figurative expreſſions: but theſe are merely the idioms of eaſtern phraſeology. In point of compoſition, I think, it muſt be owned, theſe writings are by no means elegant models, according to the rules of criticiſm now eſtabliſhed; nor equal in this reſpect to many works, both hiſtorical, and philoſophical, which have been handed down to us from antiquity.

Some

Some learned writers * have taken great pains to evince their elegance, and claſſical purity. But I think none have gone much farther than to ſhew, that a few words, and phraſes, which have been eſteemed barbarous in the New Teſtament, may be found in good writers. They have not entered critically, into the compoſition of theſe writings; which on this plan, ought chiefly to have been laboured; both as it is the moſt eſſential part of elegant writing; and as the ſacred writers appear to have paid ſo little attention to it.

But the credit of theſe divine books appears not in any reſpect to depend on inquiries of this kind; which indeed ſeem rather debaſing. It appears equally abſurd to ſuppoſe, either that the Holy Spirit attended to the trifling forms, and critical rules of human compoſition; or that the writers, if we ſuppoſe them left to themſelves in this matter, had any eye to the elegance of their works. How would every ſerious man think they had miſtaken the point, if they had attended to all the littleneſſes of fine writing, while they were engaged in the great work of publiſhing ſalvation to mankind? And yet Dr. Myddleton, with a ſtrange hardineſs of criticiſm, thinks their want of elegance is an argument of their want of inſpiration †.

In the manner therefore of *cloathing their thoughts* they ſeem to have been left intirely to themſelves; and to have written with that ſimplicity, which men, big with their ſubject, but unverſed in letters, might be ſuppoſed to write. Elegant writing is matter of taſte. It is directed to the imagination. Their writings are directed to the heart.

To put this matter however out of diſpute, the apoſtles themſelves repudiated every idea of elegance, and refinement of ſtile. Their conſtant language is, "We come not with the excellency of ſpeech, or of "wiſdom. We determine not to know any thing among you, but Jeſus "Chriſt, and him crucified. Our ſpeech, and our preaching is not with "the inticing words of man's wiſdom: but in demonſtration of the Spirit, "and of power; that your faith ſhould not ſtand in the wiſdom of men;

* See particularly Blackwall in his Diſſert. on the Sac. Claſ.

† See his introd. Lectures, p. 43.

"but in the power of God."——Here is a reaſon given to ſhew even the impropriety of any attention to theſe matters.

In St. Paul's writings indeed we are often pleaſed with the arrangement of his ſubject, as well as his manner of treating it. But St. Paul was a man of letters; and writes like one. His companion alſo St. Luke, is ſuppoſed to have had a liberal education; the effect of which we diſcover in his writings. An accurate mode of writing was the *natural* vehicle of their thoughts. But they lay no ſtreſs on any of theſe human accompliſhments. The former, we have ſeen, abſolutely rejects them. In works therefore which have ſuperior claims to our regard, they are of no conſequence. Elegance would be no addition to their value; and the want of it therefore can be no detraction from their merit.

It will readily be ſuppoſed, that writings of ſuch celebrity, as theſe goſpels, and epiſtles, would give birth to many ſpurious compoſitions in imitation of them. In fact there were many ſuch. Goſpels, and epiſtles were written; ſome with good deſigns; others with bad; ſome in the true ſpirit of chriſtianity; others in a legendary, and fabulous ſtrain. Of theſe ſpurious productions we have many traces in antiquity. As they multiplied, it became neceſſary to diſtinguiſh them from ſuch, as were of genuine origin. At what time, the canon of the Holy Scriptures was ſettled cannot eaſily be aſcertained; certainly long before it was recognized, about the year 365, by the council of Laodicea. It is the moſt general opinion, however, that it was ſettled nearly in the form, in which we now have it, before the middle of the ſecond century: for in that early period, we have reaſon to believe, it was received in all chriſtian churches, as a confirmed rule of faith, and manners.

In this ſelection nothing was allowed, but what was known, (and then it might be well known) to be derived from apoſtolic times. Tho many of theſe ſpurious writings were intrinſically good; yet, as they could not bring the teſtimony of antiquity, they were rejected. The epiſtle of Clement to the Corinthians, for inſtance, was in great eſteem;

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* Eccleſ. Hiſt. III. 24.

and

and long read publicly in churches; but it could never get admiſſion into the ſacred canon. Euſebius expreſsly affirms, that the three firſt goſpels were authorized by St. John, who lived to an extreme old age; and that he added his own as a ſupplement. This however does not ſeem intirely ſupported by internal evidence. That the ſame apoſtle collected the other books of the ſacred cannon, is mere matter of ſuppoſition: indeed it is moſt probable, that as it was well known from the earlieſt ages, which of theſe ſacred books were authentic; no *formal ſelection* was neceſſary.

Of the authenticity therefore of theſe books, the candid inquirer can entertain no doubt. Every one knows how difficult it is to aſcribe the works of an author, whoſe name they bear, to any other perſon. No combination of men could ever attribute the works of Livy to Tacitus; or of Tacitus to Livy. But with regard to the authenticity of the ſcriptures we argue on ſtill firmer ground. They have been regularly traced. Dr. Lardner, in his credibility of the goſpel-hiſtory, hath adduced a ſeries of quotations from the ſeveral books of the New Teſtament, in writings ſtill exiſting, even as far as to the very times of the apoſtles; which is, I think, a proof of the authenticity of ſcripture, ſhort only of abſolute demonſtration.

True it is, that the epiſtle to the Hebrews—the epiſtle of James—the ſecond epiſtle of Peter—the two laſt of John—the epiſtle of Jude—and the Revelations, were all received later into the ſacred canon, than the other books of ſcripture. The caſe was, moſt of thoſe writings were addreſſed to chriſtian churches in *general;* which ſometimes might occaſion a leſs certain proof of their authenticity; as they were not delegated to the care of any particular body of chriſtians. However, as all theſe writings were received at laſt, and univerſally acknowledged; we ſhould conſider this caution as a convincing argument in their favour.

About the *dates* * of many of theſe ſacred writings, there are different opinions ſtill among learned men: but there are very few circumſtances,

*. The reader may here ſee two chronological tables of the epiſtles, widely different from each other; and yet both ſupported by men of diſtinguiſhed reputation. For myſelf, I think Dr.

ſtances, in which the ſettlement of a date is of any conſequence: in general it may rather be conſidered as a matter of curioſity.

In a book, written, as the Holy Scriptures were, under the direction of God—on a ſubject of ſuch importance—and addreſſed to all mankind, one ſhould not reaſonably expect to find any difficulties. Nor is it probable, there were any on its firſt publication: and indeed in all *material*

Dr. Lardner's patient attention in making inquiries of this kind gives great weight to all his ſuppoſitions.

Chronological order of the Epiſtles by Michaelis.

		A. D.
I. Peter from	Jeruſalem	49
Gal.	Theſſalonica	51
I. Theſſ.	Corinth.	52
II. Theſſ.	Corinth.	52
I. Corinth.	Epheſus	57
II. Corinth.	Macedonia	58
I. Tim.	———	58
Romans	Corinth	end of 58
James	———	61
Philemon, Coloſſians, Epheſians, Philippians	Rome	62
Hebrews	Rome	63
Titus	Nicopolis	—
II. Peter	———	67
Jude	———	—
II. Tim.	Rome	67
Three Epiſtles of John		70
Revelations	Patmos	96

Chronological order of the Epiſtles by Dr. Lardner.

I. Theſſ.	Corinth	52
II. Theſſ.	Corinth	52
Galat.	Corinth, or Epheſus	end of 52 or begin. of 53
I. Corinth.	Epheſus	beg. of 53
I. Tim.	Macedonia	56
Titus	Macedonia, or near it	56
II. Corinth.	Macedonia	end of 57
Romans	Corinth	beg. of 58
Epheſians	Rome	beg. of 61
II. Tim.	Rome	61
James	Judea	61 or 62
Philip.	Rome	end of 62
Coloſ.	Rome	end of 62
Philemon	Rome	end of 62
Hebrews	Rome or Italy	beg. of 63
I. Peter	Rome	64
II. Peter	Rome	64
Jude	———	64—65
I. John	Epheſus	about 80
II. John	Epheſus	between 80 and 90
III. John	Epheſus	between 80 and 90
Revelations	Patmos, or Epheſus	95 or 96

points

points the ſame perſpicuity ſtill exiſts. It is plain to every one, who reads it ſeriouſly, that it is an addreſs to the heart—that it is meant to call the minds of men from the world—to eſtabliſh the belief of a future ſtate; and to prepare mankind for it by purified affections.

But tho the great *end, and intention* of it be perfectly plain, and perſpicuous; yet in matters of *leſs moment* a variety of cauſes have concurred to introduce obſcurity. Nor could it have been otherwiſe, without the interpoſition of a ſtanding miracle.

In the firſt place, miſtakes in tranſcribing have had this effect. The many collations of MSS. ſhew the great variations among them. We may reaſonably ſuppoſe, there hath not exiſted one MS. perfectly correct; and may as reaſonably conclude, that many miſtakes have crept into the Greek text, which have never yet been compleatly rectified. A very candid expoſitor, ſpeaking of ſome of the difficulties of the New Teſtament, ſays, *he knows not how to account for them, but by ſuppoſing, that here and there, our received reading hath varied from the original**.

Tranſlations alſo have occaſioned obſcurity. Ours is confeſſedly a good one. But in the beſt tranſlations many words, and expreſſions may loſe their force. The idiom of a language, ſo different from our own, will certainly without care, create difficulty. When a tranſlator, inſtead of giving, what is acknowledged, on all ſides, to be the *undoubted ſenſe*, thinks himſelf obliged to give the *literal words*, he often *miſleads* his reader. Our tranſlation, for inſtance, makes our Saviour ſay, *I thank thee, O Father, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe, and prudent, and haſt revealed them to babes;* whereas he certainly does not mean to thank God, for hiding them from the wiſe and prudent; but for making them plain to the unlearned: for ſo the Jewiſh idiom imports; and the expreſſion, no doubt, ſhould be tranſlated to imply that meaning. Thus, again, *idle words* ſhould be tranſlated *wicked words;* and the *unprofitable ſervant*, a *guilty one*. Indeed in ſome paſſages our tranſlation hath taken this liberty. The *ſteward of unrighteouſneſs*, and the *judge of unrighteouſneſs*, are well tranſlated the *unjuſt ſteward*, and the *unjuſt judge*. We regret that the ſame liberty hath not more frequently prevailed.

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* Doddridge's pref. to the 3d. Vol. of his Fam. Expoſ.

Proverbial

Proverbial modes of expreſſion—the parabolic form of inſtruction—frequent alluſions to the ceremonies of the moſaic law—together with the free and bold uſe of figurative language (tho clearly underſtood, when the ſcriptures were written) all tend, at this late day, to occaſion obſcurity.

Particles alſo, wrongly tranſlated, which frequently occur, tend greatly to obſcure the ſacred text. It is not an eaſy matter to give particles their proper force; eſpecially as they were conſidered (at leaſt before criticiſm began to form its canons) as the moſt trivial parts of a diſcourſe: whereas they are now juſtly acknowledged to be among the moſt important; inaſmuch as they form that connection between the diviſions of a ſentence, on which its ſenſe ſo greatly depends. It may be added alſo, that there are many particles, which in our verſion are rendered literally; tho in the original they are mere *expletives*, and ſhould not have been rendered at all.

The manners and cuſtoms alſo of ſo remote an age, and country, introduce great confuſion among *common readers;* who cannot eaſily reconcile themſelves to what *appears* ſo abſurd. It is difficult for them to conceive, how new wine ſhould burſt old bottles; or how a man can be taken in a bed to the top of a houſe, and let down with cords.—— Under this head may be conſidered ſeveral of our Saviour's diſcourſes to the Jews; which appear odd, and peculiar, when compared with any modern modes of expreſſion; but were, at the time when ſpoken, eaſy, and familiar. This point, I think, deſerves great attention: and particularly when we read the writings of St. John.

Even our being accuſtomed to read the ſcriptures *from our infancy*, may itſelf, without care, tend to occaſion, and confirm our ignorance. What we are well acquainted with, ſeems eaſy; and paſſages, which, in fact, we do not underſtand, may often *appear intelligible*, merely becauſe they are *familiar*.

But perhaps nothing has contributed ſo much to introduce obſcurity into the ſacred text, as the barbarous method of dividing it into chapters, and verſes. The ancient manuſcripts of the New Teſtament were, in general, without pointing, paragraph, or any other diviſion of ſentences; often

often without any diviſion of words*. A reader was then obliged to attend cloſely to the meaning, and connection of his author, in order to gather up the ſenſe. This was however too hard upon him: it made reading painful: and was attended with many inconveniences. Chapters, ſections, paragraphs, and points, have certainly their uſe. Qui benè diſtinquit, benè docet.

The firſt diviſion, which the ſeveral books of the New Teſtament underwent, was into portions for leſſons in churches. This, if properly done, had been judicious. It was certainly neceſſary. Some diviſion of this kind was made as early as the fourth century. Afterwards Robert Stephens, following ſomething of this kind, that had been introduced by Rabbi Nathan into the Hebrew ſcriptures, divided an edition, which he printed of the New Teſtament, into verſes. He acted in this buſineſs wholly unauthorized; and, what is very extraordinary, this barbarous diviſion has prevailed, I believe, over Europe; and indeed, wherever the Teſtament is read.

One ſhould naturally imagine that the univerſal reception it met with, muſt have ariſen from ſome great convenience, that attended it. Whereas, I ſuppoſe, the only thing that can be ſaid in it's favour, is it's uſe in references; which was the profeſſed end, which Stephens had in view, who was at the ſame time printing a concordance. This end might certainly have been anſwered, without mangling the text, by making marginal references; as cardinal Hugo, who compoſed the firſt concordance, had done before him.

In the mean time, the miſchief of this arbitrary diviſion, is truly lamentable. The ſcriptures, thus frittered, and broken into portions, independent of all ſenſe, and connection, are changed from a continued narrative, or argument, into a number of aphoriſms: and readers, inſtead of receiving their religion from the general ſcope of the goſpel, are too much led to receive it from detached ſentences. An opinion is proved by quoting a text: and what may not be ſo proved? Many unſcriptural opinions, no doubt, have taken riſe from this practice. For it is certainly

* This may be ſeen in the Alexandrine MS. which was given to Charles I. by the patriarch of Conſtantinople; and of which a beautiful fac-ſimile hath lately been printed.

much

much eaſier to prove a doctrine by half a dozen texts, which make a good *verbal proof*; than by the context; the ſcope of the argument; and the tenor of the goſpel. Shakeſpear had divinity enough to ſee the abſurdity of ſuch proof:

> ——————In religion,
> What damned error, but ſome ſober brow
> Will bleſs it; and approve it with a text?

If a few diviſions only were uſed, of a greater, or ſhorter length, to ſhew what paſſages have a cloſer, or more remote connection with each other (as books of all kinds, except the bible, are divided) what a different appearance would our Engliſh Teſtament aſſume!

In the mean time, it is the commentator's buſineſs to diſpel the obſcurity ariſing from all theſe cauſes. I know it is a popular argument, among young ſtudents, to depreciate the labours of commentators. "They "perplex, and confound a reader: the naked text is ſtudied more advan- "tageouſly without them."——And no doubt, it is very laborious to go through the many formidable volumes of commentators; tho we confine ourſelves to the beſt: and a ſtudent muſt be in earneſt to attempt it; tho undoubtedly his labour would be repaid.

I apprehend nobody has contributed r to bring commentators into contempt, than Mr. Lock. He condemns them all in a body; which is not perhaps quite fair, as he is a commentator himſelf. The learning, and abilities of this great man will be reſpected by every ſcholar, and every chriſtian: and the method he preſcribes of reading St. Paul's epiſtles *frequently over*, to get hold of the ſcope of the writer, muſt certainly be acknowledged rational, and juſt. But ſtill, perhaps, if Mr. Lock himſelf had not truſted to his own reaſon quite ſo much; but had ventured a little more to look into commentators, and ſift their obſervations with that penetration, of which he was maſter, he might perhaps have avoided ſome miſtakes, that are laid to his charge; and might on the whole have made a better work.

But on a ſuppoſition that Mr. Lock's abilities made a commentator's aſſiſtance unneceſſary; yet every ſtudent muſt not conſider himſelf in the ſame light. Many helps may be neceſſary to him, which were

were not ſo to Mr. Lock. The commentator's aid, in all places at leaſt, which he does not *clearly underſtand*, will be of great uſe to him; and he will often have reaſon to admire the pains they have taken to ſeek out the force of words, and figurative expreſſions—to explain Jewiſh cuſtoms, and ceremonies—to collate one part of ſcripture with another—to inquire into the meaning of idioms, and proverbial modes of ſpeaking—to explain geographical, and chronological difficulties—and, in ſhort, to render clear, whatever hath gathered obſcurity, through a courſe of time. And can any young ſtudent ſuppoſe, either, that theſe inquiries do not tend greatly to elucidate the ſcriptures?—Or that his own endeavours can be equal to them? Or indeed, that the endeavours of any ſingle perſon can attain a degree of knowledge, which muſt riſe in perfection from the labours of one improving on another?

No doubt, as the ſcriptures have been more commented on, than any other books—and as people of all profeſſions, and opinions, and under prejudices of every kind, have laboured in this work, there will of courſe be many things ſaid on the ſubject, which had been better unſaid. Nay even the beſt commentators may have their particular opinions, which may often miſlead their interpretations. Let the ſtudent therefore, with his beſt judgment, endeavour to find out, where the commentator trifles—where he refines—or, above all things, where he deviates from common ſenſe, which ſhould always guide our interpretations of ſcripture. But let him well examine the numberleſs lights, which their united labours have thrown upon the ſacred text, before he venture to condemn them *in the groſs*. The ſcriptures are perhaps better underſtood now, through the means of able commentators, than they have ever been, ſince the time of their firſt publication.

The following work is certainly not intended as a *ſubſtitute* to the labours of the many learned men, who have commented on the ſcriptures; but rather as an *introduction* to them. It is meant to give in a ſhort compaſs, *a general idea* of what the commentator diſcuſſes *at large*. In their works we have the *parts* often ably explained; but rarely a connected view of the *whole*. In the following work this plan hath been reverſed. The general ſenſe and connection of the *whole* hath been attended to, without regarding minutely the critical examination of *parts*.

So that the reader may purſue the narrative, or argument without interruption. This endeavour to place the leading ſubject in the faireſt point of light, hath ſometimes made me perhaps more conciſe, than I ſhould otherwiſe have choſen to be. I wiſhed to avoid what I thought the greateſt fault of paraphraſts, that of ſaying every thing that can be ſaid, and leaving nothing to the reader's obſervation. Many parts of ſcripture require no explanation: and a difficult paſſage is not always difficult, becauſe it is conciſe. An explanation perhaps need employ no more words than a difficulty. It appeared to me, in ſhort, a uſeful mode of commenting, to give juſt the leading ſenſe; which is ſometimes loſt, or however injured, in a multiplicity of words: while I truſt I have left nothing unſaid, except in critical matters, which will not eaſily ſtrike an obſervant reader, on looking into the original.——I have ſomtimes alſo abridged, where a ſentiment or fact is drawn out, according to the Jewiſh idiom, into repetition; or where a doctrine relates to ſome ancient error; and is leſs intereſting at this time. But when I over-run a real difficulty, the reader will generally find ſome account of it in the notes; unleſs it relate to any nicety of verbal criticiſm, which I leave to works more profeſſedly written on thoſe ſubjects. I refer however to each verſe in the margin, that the reader may, with eaſe, apply elſewhere for ſatisfaction, when he miſſes it here. A clear, connected diſcourſe, without pauſing long at obſtacles, hath been chiefly aimed at, which may itſelf leſſen many difficulties; and by throwing a *general* light over the *whole*, make even the *parts* more intelligible. "I am more "and more convinced (ſays a pious, and able expoſitor) that the vulgar "ſenſe of the New Teſtament, that is, the ſenſe, in which an honeſt man "of plain ſenſe would take it on his firſt reading it, is almoſt every where, "the true, general ſenſe of any paſſage: tho an acquaintance with lan-"guage, and antiquity, with an attentive meditation on the text, and con "text, may illuſtrate the ſpirit and energy of a multitude of places *."

Upon the whole, in this expoſition I have endeavoured as nearly as I can, to give the ſcriptures in *ſuch a dreſs*, as I humbly, (very humbly,)

* Doddr. fam. Expoſ. Vol. II. p. 29.

ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe they might have appeared in, if they had been *written originally in Engliſh;* and accommodated to the *cuſtoms, idioms, and modes of phraſeology now in uſe;* and by giving them this modern caſt, I have *attempted* to make the *ſenſe of them,* as familiar to *our ears,* as it was to thoſe of the *early chriſtians.* One great point I have laboured, is to make the connection between the ſeveral parts of a diſcourſe, as eaſy as I can. The Jewiſh writers, among whom compoſition was not cultivated as a ſcience, were little attentive to this matter. A train of ideas, no doubt, flowed regularly in their minds; but it is not always obvious to a modern ear, which is uſed to a more artificial combination. In the writings of St. Paul this abruptneſs is particularly remarkable. On this point I have taken all the pains I could, and have uſed the beſt helps I could find, to ſhew the connection.

Some writers have undertaken a taſk, which (I ſpeak with diffidence) appears equally arduous, and unneceſſary—that of *harmonizing* the ſcriptures, by bringing them into agreement in every *minute particular.* That there exiſts the moſt harmonious agreement among the evangelical writers, in all the *doctrines of religion,* and in all the circumſtances of any conſequence in the *hiſtory,* every body, who reads the ſcriptures *candidly,* muſt acknowledge. But that there are many little contrarieties, in dates, and trifling circumſtances; cannot well, I think, be denied. "Indeed if no "*tranſpoſition* be allowed, (ſays a very candid harmonizer*,) it is abſo-"lutely impoſſible in many paſſages of goſpel-hiſtory, to make any con-"ſiſtent harmony of the evangeliſts at all: as every attentive reader muſt "often have obſerved." I am clearly of his opinion. And if it be neceſſary to allow *tranſpoſition* in the evangeliſts; by a parity of reaſon other little *contrarities* muſt be allowed alſo. In fact, the *unimportant detail* of an action ſeems below their notice.

I do not mean to inſinuate, that every thing in the goſpels, which has the appearance of a contradiction, is really ſuch: for many of theſe ſeeming contradictions have been happily reconciled. Nor do I mean to inſinuate, that none of them are worth the attention of the learned:

* Fam. Expoſ. Vol. II. p. 616.

for ſome of them certainly affect the leading facts of the hiſtory, and deſerve notice. All I mean, is, that when circumſtances, (evidently in themſelves, and in their connection, *unimportant*,) cannot eaſily be brought to ſlide into each other, it is better, I think, to leave them, as of no moment; than to endeavour to draw them together, by forced, and unnatural ſuppoſitions. Circumſtances indeed of this kind appear ſo far from injuring the authenticity of theſe ſacred books; that they ſeem to add a beautiful ſimplicity to them; and even to give a force to their evidence, which it would not have had, if it had tallied in the minuteſt particulars.

See how this matter ſtands in common life. Four witneſſes are produced to give their evidence on a fact, which had happened about thirty, or forty years before. This is the exact ſtate of the evangelical evidence. In all the great leading circumſtances, which tend to prove the only points, on which the queſtion turns, they are perfectly agreed. In theſe their memory ſerves them. They are matters of moment, and have made an impreſſion. In the mean time, with regard to other particulars they vary: but they are ſuch particulars as no way affect the *main queſtion*; and ſuch as, it is evident, the memory of four people cannot equally, nor exactly retain, through ſo long a period.

But is not this all the evidence you would deſire? Does human teſtimony (which is founded on memory) reach farther? And indeed does not ſuch evidence uſually appear even ſtronger, than when there is a *perfect agreement in every particular?* Is not ſuch trivial exactneſs the characteriſtic rather of *colluſive*, than of *honeſt* teſtimony? Indeed when the fact is *recent*, you expect *more exactneſs* in the evidence: but I am ſpeaking here only of ſuch evidence, as the apoſtolic evidence was, when the facts teſtified, had happened many years before the teſtimony was given. A captious lawyer indeed might endeavour to take the advantage of theſe variations; but certainly no ſincere inquirer after truth would attempt it.

But the evangelic teſtimony, you ſay, is of a different kind. It is not founded on *memory*, but on *inſpiration*; and therefore, notwithſtanding any lapſe of time, ſhould be exact in every particular.

No

No doubt, it would, if that were the caſe. But who can ſay how far inſpiration extends? The evangelic writers themſelves acknowledge, that they often ſpeak on *human authority*. St. Luke, in the beginning of his goſpel, expreſsly ſays, he wrote ſuch things, as had been *delivered to him by eye-witneſſes*. If he had had them from *inſpiration*, it was abſurd ſurely to appeal to a *weaker* teſtimony, when he had a *ſtronger*. St. Paul alſo ſometimes ſpeaks with *uncertainty*: as when he mentions thoſe perſons, whom he had baptized, he adds, *I know not whether I baptized any other**. Sometimes again, he makes a plain diſtinction between what he ſays as an *inſpired apoſtle*; and what he ſays merely as *a man*. Of this we have ſeveral inſtances in the ſeventh chapter of the firſt of Corinthians †. He had a conteſt alſo with St. Peter about a point in religion, tho no very intereſting one. Both however could not be right; and yet, if inſpiration had extended univerſally, we might have expected perfect unanimity.

As the apoſtolic writers themſelves lay no claim to this extent of inſpiration; ſo neither can it be proved, I think, from any part of ſcripture. We are told indeed that the apoſtles ſhould be *led into all the truth*; and that *the Spirit ſhould bring all things to their remembrance, whatſoever Jeſus had ſaid unto them*. But neither of theſe expreſſions, nor any other, that I recollect, can fairly be interpreted to mean more, than that the apoſtles ſhould be reſtrained by the Holy Spirit from error; and led into the remembrance of all the truths, which their Maſter had taught them, *as far as religion was concerned*. Divine truth was the only object, that was aimed at. In whatever concerned this, their minds, no doubt, were ſpiritually illumined. But in other matters, (which were unimportant,) and indeed in all *matters of fact*, which fell under their own eyes, or which they received from juſt information, their teſtimony was only the teſtimony of honeſt men. And in giving ſuch teſtimony, I ſee not why their evidence might not be as fallible in trifling circumſtances, (*ſecured* at the ſame time, from *errors of importance*,) as human evidence commonly is, at ſuch a diſtance of time.——What is it, for inſtance, to the truth of religion, whether our Saviour, on croſſing the lake of Geneſaret, met one demoniac, or two? Or, whether he met them in the country of

* I. Cor. i. 16.

† See the 6th, 10th, 25th, and 40th verſes.

the

the Gaderenes, or of the Gergefenes; which two people were contiguous? The atteftation to the truth of the gofpel by a miracle, which is the great leading fact, and all that is neceffary, is the fame in all thefe cafes.—— What again fignifies it to the truth of religion, whether that noble difcourfe, which our Saviour gave the people, and which is commonly called the *fermon on the mount*, was really fpoken on a *mount*, or on a *plain?* Our Saviour fpoke many difcourfes, no doubt, in both fituations: and it might eafily efcape the narrator's memory, in which of them this particular difcourfe was fpoken. If St. Matthew, and St. Luke had written in concert, they would have taken care, no doubt, to agree in this particular. As they did not write in concert, there happens to be a trifling difference. But is the *main queftion* affected by it? Is there any difference in the *doctrine*, which the two evangelifts delivered from their Mafter's mouth? This is all that is material; and all, that the Holy Spirit, we may fuppofe, faw neceffary to *bring to their remembrance.*

Indeed if the evidence of the evangelifts had been throughout miraculous, and infpired, why did their bleffed Mafter carry them conftantly with him as *witneffes* of what they faw, and heard. All this was totally unneceffary; and became at once unmeaning parade. Infpiration would have done the thing at once. But the great Author of nature never admits a miracle, where the ordinary courfe of providence is fufficient: and in recording a *plain fact*, a miraculous intervention is certainly *unneceffary.*

The bifhop of Offory in his preface to his harmony obferves, that *a harmony by a juxta-pofition of parallel paffages, is often the beft commentary.* It certainly is; and nobody can read the evangelifts attentively without comparing parallel paffages. But the obfervation cannot hold with regard to thofe paffages, which are *marked with uncertainty;* and about which *harmonizers themfelves are at variance. The evangelifts, treating of the fame fubject*, fays the bifhop, quoting Mr. Lock, *do give great light to one another, and I think may, with the greateft advantage be read in harmony.* True: but we cannot fuppofe that Mr. Lock means here by *harmony*, every *arbitrary fuppofition*, that may be called fo. He expresfly fays, he fpeaks only of the evangelifts, *when treating of the fame fubject.* When it is uncertain, whether they *do treat of the fame fubject*, or *not*—when Le Clerk, for inftance, thinks in one way; Dr. Doddrige in another; Dr. Macknight,

Macknight, or ſome other harmoniſt, in a third; and ſo on; we may be entertained with *ingenious conjectures;* but ſtill we get no ground—the harmony reſts on human authority; and we are ſtill left in a field of uncertainty.——It appears therefore, we ſhould only contend for the harmony of the goſpels, when that harmony is *generally acknowledged;* and when the evangeliſts obviouſly, as Mr. Lock phraſes it, *treat of the ſame ſubject.* Where conjecture begins, harmony ends.

It ſeems therefore a part of religious wiſdom, to be cautious on this head. By laying the force of the evangelical evidence too ſtrongly, as is often the caſe, on *it's exact concurrence in every particular,* the unſteady reader is led to ſuppoſe, that it's truth, in a great degree, depends on this concurrence; and when he ſees it, as he often muſt ſee it, awkwardly ſupported, he may be apt to doubt the whole truth of the goſpel from the production of this feeble mode of evidence. Like thoſe ſkilful engineers therefore, who give up ſome untenable out-poſt, that they may draw the ſtrength of the garriſon, where it will be moſt wanted, it ſhould ſeem we ſhould withdraw our defence from theſe weaker parts, which ſeem not worth maintaining, and employ it on thoſe ſtrong holds, which are both capable of defence, and of ſufficient importance to be defended. "The authority of the ſcriptures (as the ſagacious Eraſmus obſerved long "ago) would not be invalidated, tho ſmall inaccuracies ſhould be found "in them in matters of little, or no conſequence, as it is by no means "clear, how far divine inſpiration extended *."

I am fearful however of blaming thoſe commentators, who on this plan, have choſen to blend all the evangeliſts together; and exhibit one narrative from four. But tho I dare not venture to blame them; I have taken a contrary method myſelf. My reaſons are theſe.

In the firſt place, by explaining the evangeliſts ſeparately, in the order in which we have them, the difficulties of each may the more eaſily be examined. When the four goſpels are melted together, the *parts* of *each* are loſt; and the reader is leſs able to look for explanations; which readily unfold themſelves, when the books are turned over in their natural order. He is leſs able alſo to underſtand a difficulty, when he meets it out

* Epiſt. 376.

of

of it's proper place: he wants the context to guide his interpretations; and muſt truſt more to the harmonizer's judgment.

Secondly, by explaining the four evangeliſts ſeparately, the *parts* are not only preſerved more diſtinct; but the *whole* is more uniform. It ſeems difficult to blend the *four* goſpels into *one well-arranged* narrative. It is *impoſſible* without many *harſh ſuppoſitions*. St. Luke, for inſtance, gives us many parables, and hiſtorical paſſages, of which none of the other evangeliſts take notice; and yet St. Luke gives us no circumſtances to eſtabliſh their chronological order. How, and where are they to be introduced? We may call it *harmonizing*, if we pleaſe, when we blend them with the other evangeliſts: but it is certainly a very forced, and arbitrary mode of connecting. Several parallel paſſages alſo agree ſo ill, that we muſt neceſſarily ſuppoſe ſome little variation, or we muſt ſuppoſe them ſeparate narrations, which often gives a great awkwardneſs to the whole. The account for inſtance, which the four evangeliſts * give of Simon's ſupper, are ſo different; that all of them cannot well be interwoven together: and yet, if we conceive them with the generality of interpreters, two different events, it is ſomewhat difficult to ſuppoſe, that Jeſus was invited twice to ſupper by two different people of the name of Simon—that at each ſupper a woman came in with an alabaſter box of precious ointment—that ſhe twice anointed him—that the ſame perſons were preſent on both occaſions—and that ſome of the very ſame obſervations were made.

Laſtly, the evangelical proof appears with *more force*, when four witneſſes come forward; and each ſeparately gives his evidence (evidence given on record, at different places, and in different times,) without the leaſt *material* variation. We have hence certainly that ſtrong, that irreſiſtible proof, which no *blended narrative*, or *ſyſtemized teſtimony*, can give. This is the order, and mode, in which it hath pleaſed God to exhibit the evidence of the goſpel; and we may therefore take it for granted, it was the beſt.

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* Mat. xxvi. 6.——Mark xiv. 3.——Luke vii. 26.——John xii. 1.

I ſhall

I ſhall juſt add to this preface a few explanations of perſons and things, which occur frequently in ſcripture.

The *Samaritans* were originally heathen, ſettled by the king of Aſſyria, after the captivity, in the Iſraelitiſh cities. Many of the ten tribes, afterwards returning, incorporated with them, in their old habitations: and thus, by degrees the Samaritans became a body of ſpurious Jews. They received the pentateuch; but there was ſtill a great mixture of heatheniſm in their religion: and the native Jews entertained an unbounded hatred towards them.

A *Scribe* was a general name, among the Jews for a *public teacher*; tho he is ſometimes alſo known in ſcripture by the name of a *lawyer*. St. Luke particularly makes this diſtinction; calling the former γραμματευς; and the latter νομικος, or νομοδιδασκαλος. The Scribes, in general, were of the ſect of the Phariſees; and converſant, like them, in traditions. On our Saviour's appearance in public, they began to loſe their influence with the people, who obſerved, that Jeſus taught them *as one having authority, and not as the Scribes*.

The *Herodians* ſeem to have been rather a political, than a religious ſect. They were the eſpouſers of Herod's maxims; and under his influence ſupported the Roman power. In religious principles, it is ſuppoſed, they were chiefly Sadducees *.

Of the Jewiſh feſtivals, the moſt diſtinguiſhed, was the *Paſſover*; which laſted ſeven days. It was inſtituted in commemoration of the angel's *paſſing over* the houſes of the Iſraelites, when the firſt-born of the Egyptians were ſlain. It is called alſo in ſcripture the feaſt of *unleavened bread*.

The next great feſtival was the *Pentecoſt*; which laſted only one day; taking it's name from being celebrated fifty days after the Paſſover. It was inſtituted in remembrance of the giving of the law. We ſometimes alſo find this feſtival called the *feaſt of harveſt*, from the ſeaſon when it was celebrated: and alſo the *feaſt of weeks*, from it's being numbered by weeks after the paſſover.

* Compare Mat. xvi. 6, with Mark viii. 15.

The third great festival was the *feast of Tabernacles*, which lasted seven days; and was observed in the time of vintage. It was the annual record of that mode of dwelling, which the children of Israel had used in travelling through the wilderness; and preserved the remembrance of the great deliverances they experienced at that time.——All these great festivals were appointed by the law to be celebrated at Jerusalem; whither the whole nation was injoined to repair.

Every seventh day was a *sabbath:* every seventh year a *sabbatical year;* and every fiftieth year, *a Jubilee.*——The Jews also observed the feast of the *New-moon;* which was celebrated on the first new-moon of the year. This feast was called also the *feast of Trumpets*, from the mode of it's being proclaimed.——We read also of two other feasts among the Jews; tho both of human institution; the *feast of Purim;* and the *feast of the Dedication.* The former was instituted in remembrance of the delivery of the people by Esther: the latter was appointed by Judas Maccabeus in honour of cleansing the temple, after the pollutions of Antiochus.

Several fasts also were observed among the Jews, both annually, and on particular occasions: but none of them were of divine institution, except the *great day of atonement*, which was observed between the feasts of Pentecost, and Tabernacles. On that day the high-priest entered the Holy of Holies, to make expiation for his own sins, and the sins of the people: and on that day also the ceremony of the azazel, or scape-goat, was performed.

The Jewish division of time also is often mentioned in scripture.—The day was divided into four parts. The first part, beginning at six, ended at nine; which being a space of three hours, nine o'clock was called the third hour. The second part, beginning at nine, ended at twelve, which was called the sixth hour. The third part, beginning at twelve, ended at three; which was called the ninth hour; and the fourth part, beginning at three, ended at six; which of course became the twelfth hour.——The night was divided into four watches; the evening-watch; the middle-watch; the cock-crowing; and the morning-watch.

End of the General Preface.

THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST,

DRAWN FROM THE PROPHECIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE life of Chriſt, as recorded by the evangeliſts, cannot, I think, be introduced better, than by the ſame life, as we have it delineated in the Old Teſtament. In this great receptacle of divine truth are contained three modes of prophetic evidence; each of them characterizing the Meſſiah.

The firſt is contained in the *hiſtory of the Jews;* from the earlieſt period of it, till their ſettlement in Canaan. Here the reſemblance, tho in ſome parts faint, may be generally traced.——God's call of Abraham from an idolatrous country, if not a type, was at leaſt a cloſe repreſentation of the gracious call of mankind by Chriſt, from the pollutions of the world: and that faith, by which the patriarch was led through all the difficulties of his travels, was preciſely that faith, which Chriſt requires from us in paſſing through a ſtate of trial. For this we have

St. Paul's authority *.——The miraculous birth of Isaac, the child of promise, was a type of the birth of Christ; as his sacrifice was of Christ's death.——The bondage of the children of Israel in Egypt was a lively representation of the bondage of sin, from which Christ delivered us: and Moses as a deliverer, was a type of Christ. He himself alludes to it, when he tells the people, that *God should raise unto them a prophet, like unto him* †: that is, a deliverer as he had been.——The travels of the children of Israel through ihe wilderness were productive of many prophetic events. Their miraculous supply of food from heaven—their thirst quenched with water from a rock, which St. Paul tells us was an emblem of Christ ‡—and the lifting up of the brazen serpent, which our Saviour himself mentions as a representation of his crucifixion ‖—may all be called *historical prophecies* of different parts of the christian dispensation.——Lastly, after this probationary travel through the wilderness was over, the settlement of the Jews in the land of promise under Joshua, is represented in scripture, as a type of the christian's rest in a state of happiness, through Christ §.

Another mode of *prophetic evidence* contained in the books of the Old Testament, is wonderfully displayed in the various ceremonies of the Jewish church, after it's perfect establishment. Almost every one of these ceremonies pointed strongly to Christ.——But there is something here rather singular. The *history* of the Jews, we see, presents a typical representation of the *whole scheme* of our redemption: whereas the *rites, and ceremonies* of the Jewish church are confined almost intirely to that one great *end* of it, the atonement, which Christ made by his death for the sins of mankind. Thus the sacrifices of the temple, in all their various kinds, set forth, in different views, the shedding of his sacred blood, and that expiation for sin, which it was intended to make. The scape-goat, which was sent into the wilderness, after the sins of the people had been confessed over it, represented the same great end. The passover, tho primarily instituted in remembrance of the angel's passing over the houses of the Israelites, when he slew the first-born of the Egyptians, had refer-

* See Gal. iii. 6, 7. † Deut. xviii. 15. ‡ I. Cor. x. 4.
‖ John iii. 14. § Heb. iv. 1—1[illegible].

rence

rence alſo to that great paſchal lamb, which was ſlain for the ſins of mankind. The veil of the temple, which ſeparated the Holy of Holies from the other parts of the temple, ſhewed it's connection, at the time of Chriſt's death, with that great event. The partition wall between the Jews, and Gentiles, was then broken down.—The high-prieſt entering the Holy of Holies to make atonement for his own ſins, and the ſins of the people, reſpected plainly, that great interceſſion, which was afterwards to be made by Chriſt. Many other typical repreſentations might be inſiſted on.

The third mode of *prophetic evidence*, is that, which ariſes from *verbal prophecy*. This is by far the moſt extenſive, and the moſt determined; concentring in itſelf both the others. It is this only, which I mean at preſent to conſider as an introduction to the evangelical life of Chriſt: and in order to place it in the ſtrongeſt point of light, I ſhall collect from the whole maſs of prophecy thoſe predictions only, which appertain the *moſt evidently* to the life, and death, and functions of the Meſſiah: and I ſhall rather arrange them in the order of time, in which they were *compleated*; than in the order of time, in which they were *uttered*.

But before I produce theſe prophecies, it may be proper to ſay a few words in anſwer to ſome objections, that have been made to them. And tho theſe objections have been fully anſwered by learned men, it is not proper to leave them here wholly untouched.——It hath been ſaid particularly, that *there is much heterogeneous matter mixed with the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, ſo as greatly to obſcure them*;—and, *that the Jews themſelves, who ought to be beſt acquainted with their own ſcriptures, do not apply the prophetic parts of them to Chriſt, in the manner we chriſtians do.*

With regard to the firſt objection, that *there is much heterogeneous matter mixed with the prophecies, ſo as greatly to obſcure them*; it is true: and free-thinkers have ſometimes amuſed themſelves, by making centos of prophecies from Homer, and Virgil, and other authors. But a jeſt is no argument; nor a *general reſemblance, a proper likeneſs*. To find out *general reſemblances* among things, is one of the eaſieſt offices of invention. If the free-thinker can produce from Homer and Virgil, ſuch a ſeries of paſſages applicable to the life, and death of the Meſſiah, as may be produced

duced from the writings of the Old Teſtament; I ſhould be inclined to receive Homer and Virgil among the prophets. If not, the jeſt recoils upon the jeſter.——Let us then candidly examine the objection, by ſhewing firſt the *manner*, in which prophetic notices are conveyed; and ſecondly, the *propriety* of that manner.——The prophet, generally takes a handle from ſome occaſion, (on which he is conſulted; or on which he encourages, exhorts, or threatens,) to carry the view beyond the primary idea; and to mix with it ſome circumſtance, relating to the kingdom of the Meſſiah. Thus when Iſaiah was ſent to Ahaz in his diſtreſs on the rumour of an invaſion from the two kings of Syria and Iſrael, he carried, by the command of God, his infant ſon with him, as a ſign to Ahaz. Oſtenſible ſigns were a common medium in the eaſt, both of prophecy, and inſtruction. He informed the king therefore, that before the child he held in his arms, ſhould learn to diſtinguiſh one thing from another, the land ſhould be delivered from the two kings, of whom he was in dread. But immediately fired with the prophetic ſpirit, from the view of one child he proceeds to another; and breaks out into that noble prophecy of Immanuel, who was to be the means of a ſtill greater deliverance; of which that from the two kings was the type only, or ſign *.——Thus again, the prophet Zechariah, being ſent to the Jewiſh rulers, warns them, under the idea of bad ſhepherds, of their approaching ruin; and preſenting himſelf as a ſhepherd, aſks what price they will give him? On their offering him thirty pieces of ſilver, the price of a ſlave, he throws the money in contempt to a potter, then at work near the temple. By this ſign, or action, he ſhews the Jews, how contemptuouſly they ſhould hereafter eſtimate the great ſhepherd, whom God ſhould ſend among them; breaking, at the ſame time, his paſtoral

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* Iſaiah vii. There is ſome difficulty in the fourteenth, fifteenth and ſixteenth verſes of this chapter, in which the prophecy is contained. The two children ſeem to be confounded; that, which was to be a *ſign to Ahaz*, with that, which was to be a *ſign to the houſe of David*. But the whole is rendered eaſy by ſome ſuch explication as this, which the original warrants.—V. 14. Behold a Virgin ſhall conceive, and bear a ſon, and ſhall call his name Immanuel. (V. 15) He ſhall be brought up, as children commonly are, *till* his reaſon begin to open. (V. 16) But before *this* child (my infant ſon, which I hold in my arms) ſhall come to the uſe of his reaſon, the deliverance from the two kings, which I predict, ſhall be effected.

ſtaves,

ſtaves, as a ſign that all covenant between God, and the Jews ſhould be broken.——Thus then the prophet uſually mixes ſome *future bleſſing* relative to the Meſſiah's kingdom, with the temporal bleſſing which was the *immediate object* of his diſcourſe—or ſome *future threat*, of which that *immediately impending*, was only the ſign. The *occaſion* therefore becomes merely the *vehicle* of the prophecy: and, I apprehend, not only ſo in the greater prophecies, in which the light ſhines ſtrongly and forcibly; but in what may be called the coruſcations of prophecy—thoſe tranſient, accidental rays, which are continually ſhooting out on various occaſions; and yet are capable of being collected into a ſtrong light.——Let us now ſuppoſe the prophet, inſtead of involving his prediction in this obſcurity, and taking the occaſion that offered, had uttered his prophecy in ſet form, and in *plain hiſtoric language;* what would have been the conſequence? Certainly they, whoſe intereſt it was, would have taken every meaſure to counteract the prophecy: and the providence of God, in order to bring about the completion of it, muſt have upheld it by a conſtant ſeries of miracles, to thwart, and oppoſe all the various ſchemes, which would be laid by deſigning men to counteract it. Whereas the prophecy *veiled in this obſcure form*, was often compleated by thoſe *very perſons*, who wiſhed *leaſt* to ſee it compleated; and who in fact never knew that it *was compleated* till the completion *ſtared them in the face*. While at the ſame time, in it's obſcure form it anſwered all the ends of prophecy to thoſe who were well-diſpoſed. Tho *ſhining in a dark place*, it gave light ſufficient to *raiſe the hopes* of the devout worſhipper with a *diſtant view* of the Meſſiah; and when *fulfilled*, it *confirmed his faith*.

But ſtill, with regard to the ſecond objection, one ſhould ſuppoſe that the Jews muſt have underſtood *their own* ſcriptures better than any other interpreters; and we are told they do not interpret them as we do.——*Now* indeed they do not. They have changed their ground. But *formerly* they did. All the Jews, of whom there were great numbers, who embraced the chriſtian religion, univerſally did it on the ſtrength of theſe prophecies. And that the Jewiſh nation, in general, interpreted the prophecies in this way, appears plain from the many falſe Chriſts, and falſe prophets, who were continually at that time ariſing to anſwer the ideas of the people by fulfilling the prophecies; tho they became in-

ſtrumentally

ſtrumentally the cauſe of the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, by irritating the Romans, through their frequent rebellions. Indeed it is impoſſible to conceive, that the evangelical writers could quote, and apply the prophecies in the *familiar manner* they did, if they had not been well aſſured, they applied them in that ſenſe, which was *at that time* the *commonly* received one. To this day indeed many of the Jews interpret moſt of the prophecies of the Meſſiah, as we do; but will not allow the completion of them. Others, who cannot fully deny their force, have recourſe to two Meſſiahs, a *ſuffering*, and a *triumphant* one. In ſhort, the Jews ſay as little as they can ſay, when they muſt ſay ſomething, or elſe be Jews no longer. Among all the opponents of chriſtianity the Jews certainly oppoſe the prophecies of the Meſſiah with the worſt grace. While they continue a diſperſed, wandering people, one ſhould wonder with what face they can deny, that Shiloh was come. In the *preſent ſtate* of the Jewiſh people, the prophecies *could not* be fulfilled. There is now no temple left for the glory of the Meſſiah to fill—no Sanhedrim to oppoſe him. Where is Bethlem Ephratah? Can even the very family of David be now pointed out, ſo as to aſcertain the Meſſiah's birth? Beſides, almoſt all the world, even the Mahomedan part of it, profeſs their belief now in one God. The world muſt again change it's object of worſhip, and become idolatrous, before the *Jewiſh Meſſiah*, according to prophecy, can appear.——Laſtly, the very *oppoſition* of the Jews themſelves adds ſtrength to the cauſe they wiſh to oppoſe: for it is one of the prophetic marks of the truth of the chriſtian religion, (and the evangeliſts apply it as ſuch,) that the Jews, *as a nation*, ſhould reject the Meſſiah—that they ſhould *hear, but not underſtand*—that they ſhould *ſee, but not perceive*—that their *eyes ſhould be darkened;* and their *ears ſhut*—that they ſhould reject the *head-ſtone of the corner*—and that God, according to the repreſentation of the prophet Iſaiah, *ſhould all day long ſtretch forth his hands towards a diſobedient, and a gain-ſaying people.*

I truſt that even from this ſlight examination of theſe two objections againſt prophecy, it will appear, there is little force in either of them. At the ſame time, it is true, that all the prophecies are not equally clear even to chriſtians themſelves. All that I have collected, I believe, are *commonly* interpreted of the Meſſiah; and cannot be applied to any perſon but Chriſt. That amazing combination particularly of *meanneſs*, and *dignity;* of *ſuffering*, and

and *exaltation*, which are among the leading ideas of thefe prophecies; fo apparently contradictory, and yet fo wonderfully exact, form an argument, I think, too ftrong to be eafily refifted. After all, however, if a few of thefe quotations be not deemed by fome to be of a prophetic caft; we refign them: a fufficient number, we truft, will ftill remain, to make out the proof abundantly convincing.

I have divided the whole collection into four fections.——The firft exhibits a feries of thofe prophecies, which contain the *earlieft*, and moft *remote* intimations of the Meffiah. They are dark, it is true: but as they plainly appear to *center in one point*, they illuftrate each other. Each prophecy, *confidered apart*, might be called obfcure; but the whole feries *in combination* emits certainly a very fpendid light. They begin with predicting a *victory*, and an *everlafting covenant*, which was to take place *between God, and all the nations of the earth*. Under the ideas of a *tree*, and a *mountain*, they hold out the *grandeur*, and *dignity* of the Meffiah's kingdom; and in a variety of beautiful images, in which all nature is reprefented in harmony, and the wild beafts of the foreft tamed, they exhibit that peace, and happinefs, and univerfal change in the manners of men, which this glorious, predicted reign was meant to introduce; difclofing, at the fame time, throughout, it's *fpiritual nature*, and the *tranfcendent joy*, with which it ought to be received.

In the fecond fection are exhibited thofe prophecies, which relate to the *birth* of the Meffiah. Here the prophetic language becomes more diftinct, and full. Thofe *general* intimations, which were given before, begin now to *break*, and *particularize*. The fame lineaments appear; but the features are more diftinctly marked. The fection opens with predicting the *fore-runner of the Meffiah*, in the perfon of John the baptift. The prophecies of the Meffiah's *birth* fucceed; and the wonderful peculiarity of his being *born of a virgin*. The *place* of his nativity is fpecified; and the *characteriftics* of his office, and the *nature* of his government, are ftrongly marked.

In the third fection I have collected fuch prophecies, as appertain to the Meffiah's *life*. The whole plan of it indeed is fpecified with as much percifion as the figurative language, in which thefe predictions

 are

are cloathed, is able to convey. He is repreſented as arrayed in the dignity of a *prophet*, like Moſes; and of a *prieſt* like Melchizedec. At the ſame time, his *mean*, and *ſuffering ſtate* on earth is ſtrongly characterized. His *gentleneſs*, and *holineſs*; the great efficacy of his *preaching*; the *offence* he gave to worldly men; his repreſſing the *ſpirit of worldly wiſdom*; his *triumphant entry* into Jeruſalem; and his *divine preſence* in the temple; are all diſtinctly held out. The *variety*, and even the *kind*, of his *miracles* are ſpecified; and his *paſtoral care* is ſtrongly repreſented by images highly expreſſive of tenderneſs, and affection.

In the laſt ſection, I have collected ſuch prophecies, as appertain to the *death* of Chriſt. Here the prophetic ſpirit, as if imagery failed in deſcribing the laſt ſcenes of this awful life, deſcends from it's lofty flights, and marks the ſeveral circumſtances of that ſolemn period in the plaineſt terms; but marks them alſo with almoſt hiſtorical preciſion. From his being *betrayed* by one of his diſciples, to his *reſurrection*, there is ſcarce a ſingle circumſtance, which one, or other of the prophetic writers hath not mentioned. The bargain made for *thirty pieces* of ſilver—the *diſperſion of the diſciples* on the ſeizing of Jeſus—the particulars of his *trial*—the *falſe witneſſes*, that appeared againſt him—the uſage of the *ſoldiers*—the *mode* of his death—the *behaviour of his enemies* during that awful period—the *time* of that great event—the *end*, and *intention* of it—the *manner* of his *burial*—and his *triumphant reſurrection*—all appear to be ſo exactly conformable to the hiſtory of the New Teſtament, that we might almoſt think them plain tranſcripts from it, if we had not the very beſt hiſtorical evidence, that they were all written, publiſhed, and well known, many hundred years—the lateſt of them above four hundred—before the birth of Chriſt.

SECTION I.

Containing the earlieſt intimations of the Meſſiah.

Gen. iii. 15. I will put enmity, between thee (ſaid God to the ſerpent) and the woman—between thy ſeed, and her ſeed. It ſhall bruiſe thy head; and
Gen. xvii. 7. thou ſhalt bruiſe his heel.——I will eſtabliſh my covenant (ſaid God to Abraham)

Abraham) between thee and me; and thy ſeed after thee, in their gene-
Gen. xvii. 19. rations, for an *everlaſting covenant*.——Sarah thy wife ſhall bear thee a
ſon, and thou ſhalt call his name Iſaac; and I will eſtabliſh my covenant
Gen. xxii. 18. with him for an *everlaſting covenant*; and with his ſeed after him. And
Gen. xxvi. 3. in thy ſeed ſhall *all the nations* of the earth be bleſſed.——I will perform
the oath (ſaid God to Iſaac) which I ſware unto Abraham thy father; and
Gen. xxviii. 14. in thy ſeed ſhall *all the nations* of the earth be bleſſed.——In thee, and
in thy ſeed, (ſaid God to Jacob) ſhall *all the families* of the earth be
I Chron. xvii. 11. bleſſed.——And it ſhall come to paſs (ſaid God to David,) when thy
days ſhall be expired, and thou ſhalt go to thy fathers, that I will raiſe
up thy ſeed after thee, which ſhall be of thy ſons: and I will ſettle him
in mine houſe *for ever*, and his *throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for evermore*.——
Iſ. xlii. 6. I the Lord have called thee in righteouſneſs: I will keep thee; and
Iſ. xlix. 8. give thee for a *covenant* to the people; for a *light of the Gentiles*.——Thus
ſaith the Lord, I will give thee for a *covenant of the people*—to eſtabliſh
Jer. xxxiii. 20. the earth—to cauſe to *inherit* the *deſolate* heritages.——Thus ſaith the
Lord, if you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of
the night, that there ſhould not be days, and nights in their ſeaſons—
then may alſo my *covenant* be broken with my ſervant David, that he
Iſ. xi. 1. 2. ſhould not have a ſon to reign upon his throne.——There ſhall come
forth a rod out of the ſtem of Jeſſe; and a branch ſhall go out of his
roots; and the *Spirit of the Lord ſhall reſt upon him*; the Spirit of wiſdom
and underſtanding; the Spirit of counſel and might; the Spirit of know-
ledge, and the fear of the Lord; and ſhall make him of quick under-
Jer. xxiii. 5. ſtanding in the fear of the Lord.——Behold the day is come, ſaith the

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I. Chron. xvii. 11. This ſeems to have been *immediately* ſpoken of Solomon; who was conſidered as a type of Chriſt: but the prophetic characters are evidently carried beyond a prince, from whoſe *immediate ſucceſſor* the kingdom was rent.

Iſa. xlii. 6; and xlix, 8. If the context be examined, the whole is evidently prophetic of the Meſſiah: but I wiſhed here only to retain ſuch paſſages, as referred to the covenant.

Jer. xxxiii 20. From this prophecy alſo that part only is taken, which belongs to the covenant. It could have no reſpect *perſonally* to David, or his *immediate* poſterity; for it was ſpoken five hundred years after David's death.

Jer. xxiii. 5. Here again the ſame ſucceſſor is promiſed to David five hundred years after the death of that prince; which promiſe had been made before to the Patriarchs, and to that prince himſelf.

Lord, that I will raiſe unto David a *righteous branch*, and a king ſhall *reign, and proſper*, and ſhall *execute judgment, and juſtice on the earth.* In his days *Judah ſhall be ſaved;* and Iſrael ſhall dwell ſafely: and this is
Jer. xxxiii. 15. his name whereby he ſhall be calle , *The Lord our righteouſneſs.*——In thoſe days will I cauſe the *Branch of righteouſneſs* to grow up unto David;
Ezek. xvii. 22. and he ſhall *execute judgment, and righteouſneſs in the land.*——Thus ſaith the Lord God, I will take the higheſt branch of the higheſt cedar; and I will plant it on a high mountain; and it ſhall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit: and be a goodly cedar; and under it *ſhall dwell all the fowls of every wing:* in the ſhadow of the branches thereof ſhall they
Zech. iii. 8. dwell.——Hear now O Joſhua, the high prieſt, thou, and thy fellows,
Zech. vi. 12. that ſit before thee: Behold I will bring forth *my ſervant the Branch*—Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, Behold the man whoſe *name is the Branch;* he ſhall grow up out of his place: and he ſhall *build the temple of the Lord;* and *he ſhall bear the glory:* and he ſhall ſit, and *rule upon his throne.*——
Mic. iv. 1. In the laſt days it ſhall come to paſs, that the mountain of the houſe of the Lord ſhall be *eſtabliſhed in the top* of the mountains, and it ſhall
Mic. iv. 7 be *exalted above the hills;* and the *people ſhall flow into it.*——The Lord *ſhall reign over them* in mount Sion, from *henceforth, even for ever.*——
Iſ. ii. 2. And it ſhall come to paſs in the laſt days, that the mountain of the houſe of the Lord ſhall be *eſtabliſhed;* and ſhall be *exalted above the hills;* and
Iſ. xxv. 7. *all nations ſhall flow into it.*——And he will deſtroy in this mountain, the face of the covering caſt over all people; and the veil, that is ſpread
Iſ. ii. 3. over all nations.——And many ſhall ſay, Come ye, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord; to the houſe of the God of Jacob: *he will teach* us his ways; and we will walk in *his paths:* for out of Sion ſhall go forth the law; and the word of the Lord from Jeruſalem: and he *ſhall judge among the nations;* and ſhall rebuke many people: and they ſhall beat their ſwords into plow-ſhares, and their ſpears into pruning-hooks: nation ſhall not riſe againſt nation; neither ſhall they learn war any
Iſ. xi. 6. more.——The wolf alſo ſhall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child ſhall lead

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Iſ. xxv. 7. There is ſomething extremely grand in thus repreſenting the goſpel as removing the darkneſs ſpread over all nations by the drawing up of a vaſt curtain, to let in the light.

them.

them. And the cow and the bear ſhall feed, and their young ones lie down together; and the lion ſhall eat ſtraw like the ox. The ſucking child ſhall play on the hole of the aſp; and the weaned child ſhall put his hand on the cockatrice den. And they ſhall not hurt, nor deſtroy in all my holy mountain: for *the earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of the Lord,* as the waters cover the ſea. And in that day, there ſhall be a root of Jeſſe, which ſhall ſtand for an *enſign to the people.* To it ſhall the *Gen-*
Gen. xlix. 10. *tiles ſeek:* and *his reſt* ſhall be glorious.——The ſcepter ſhall not depart from Judah; nor a lawgiver from between his feet, *until Shiloh come:*
Numb. xxiv. 17. and unto him ſhall the *gathering of the people* be.——There ſhall come
Iſ. xlix. 6. *a Star* out of Jacob, and a ſcepter ſhall ariſe out of Iſrael.——I will alſo give thee for *a light to the Gentiles,* that thou mayeſt be my ſalvation
Dan. vii. 13. unto the *ends of the earth.*——I ſaw in the night-viſions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came in the clouds of heaven; and came to the Ancient of days. And there was given unto him *dominion,* and *glory,* and *a kingdom,* that *all people, nations, and languages,* ſhould ſerve him. *His* dominion is an *everlaſting dominion,* which ſhall not paſs away; and
Iſ. xli. 27. *his* kingdom, that which *ſhall not be deſtroyed.*——Behold I will give to
Iſ. xl. 9. Jeruſalem one, that bringeth good tidings—O Sion, that bringeth good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain. O Jeruſalem, that bringeth good tidings, lift up thy voice with ſtrength. Lift it up. Be not afraid.
Iſ. xlix. 13. Say unto the cities of Judah, *Behold your God.*—Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into ſinging, O mountains: for the Lord hath *comforted his people:* and will have mercy on his afflicted.—

Gen. xlix. 10. Some have objected that this prophecy was fulfilled in Moſes. But what ſcepter had Judah before Moſes? The word *Shiloh* ſignifies *ſent*; and was always interpreted by the ancient Jews of the Meſſiah. It is ſuppoſed indeed by many interpreters, that Moſes himſelf alluded to this prophecy, when he expreſſes his backwardneſs to God in going to Pharoah. *Send I pray thee by the hand of him, whom thou wilt ſend*—that is by the *Shiloh,* whom thou haſt promiſed. How very exactly this prophecy was fulfilled, is very apparent. The diſperſion of the Jews, independent of prophecy, is one of the moſt ſingular events in the hiſtory of mankind: but when we conſider it as the completion of prophecy—when we conſider this people diſperſed, and wandering among all the nations upon earth—without temples—without laws, without government—connected with none; but diſtinct from all—as if preſerved to compleat future prophecies—the whole together, I think, forms an argument of ſufficient force to weigh againſt all the cavils of infidelity.

Unto

Mal. iv. 2. Unto you that fear my name, ſhall the Sun of righteouſneſs ariſe with healing in his wings.

SECTION II.

Containing thoſe prophecies, which relate to the birth of the Meſſiah.

Iſ. xl. 3. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderneſs, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord*, make *ſtraight* in the deſart a highway for our God. Every *valley* ſhall be *exalted*, and every *mountain*, and *hill*, ſhall be made *low;* and the *crooked* ſhall be made *ſtraight;* and the *rough* places *plain*. And the *glory of the Lord ſhall be revealed*, and *all fleſh* ſhall ſee it together;
Mal. iv. 5. for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.——Behold I will ſend you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the *great and dreadful day of*
Mal. iii. 1. *the Lord*.——I will ſend my meſſenger; and he ſhall *prepare the way before me;* and the *Lord, whom ye ſeek*, ſhall ſuddenly come to his temple—even the *meſſenger of the covenant* ye delight in. Behold *he will come with*
Pſ. ii. 6. *the Lord of hoſts*.——I have ſet my king upon my holy hill of Sion. Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. I will give thee *the heathen* for thine *inheritance;* and the *utmoſt parts of the earth* for thy *poſſeſſion*.
Iſ. vii. 14. ——The Lord himſelf ſhall give you a ſign; Behold, a *Virgin ſhall con-*
Mic. v. 2. *ceive*, and bear a ſon, and ſhall call his name *Immanuel*.——And thou, *Bethlem Ephratah*, tho thou be little among the thouſands of Judah, yet *out of thee* ſhall he come forth, who is to be the ruler *in Iſrael:* whoſe
Iſ. ix. 2. *goings forth have been from of old; from everlaſting*.——The people that walked in *darkneſs* have ſeen a *great light:* they that dwell in the land of the *ſhadow of death*, upon them hath the *light ſhined*. For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government ſhall be upon *his* ſhoulder: and his name ſhall be called *Wonderful, Counſellor, the*

Iſ. xl. iii. By *mountains*, and *rough ways*, the prophet indicates the moral difficulties, which the goſpel tended to remove.

Pſ. ii. 6. This prophecy *of the heathen, and the utmoſt parts of the earth as a poſſeſſion*, is, in other language the old patriarchal promiſe, *in thee ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed.*

mighty

mighty God, the everlasting Father, the prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government, and peace, there shall be *no end.*

SECTION III.

Containing those prophecies, which relate to the life of the Messiah—his preaching, and his miracles.

Deut. xviii. 18. I will raise them a *prophet from among their brethren* (said God to Moses) *like unto thee*; and will put my words in his mouth; and he
Is. liii. 2. shall speak unto them *all that I shall command.*——He hath no *form, nor comeliness;* and when we shall see him, there is no *beauty* that we should desire him. He is *despised and rejected* of men—*a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:* and we hid as it were our faces from him. He
Is. xlii. 2. was *despised,* and we esteemed him not.——He shall not *cry,* nor *cause his voice to be heard in the streets.* A bruised reed shall he not break; and smoaking flax shall he not quench. He shall bring forth *judgment*
Is. lii. 7. *with truth.*——How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth *good tidings*—that *publisheth peace*—that *publisheth salvation*—
Zech. ii. 10. that saith unto Sion, *thy God reigneth.*——Sing, and rejoice, O daughter of Sion; for lo! I come; and will dwell in the midst of thee. And *many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day; and shall be my people:* and I will dwell in the midst of thee; and thou shalt know, that the
Is. xlii. 10. Lord hath sent me unto thee.——Behold my Servant, whom I have chosen—mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth *judgment to the Gentiles.* He shall not be discouraged, till he have set *judgment on the earth;* and the *isles shall*

Deut. xviii. 18. That no prophet ever did arise in Israel, *like unto Moses,* is taken notice of by Samuel, or whoever added the concluding part to the pentateuch. See Deut. xx. 10. The great leading characters in Moses, is his *delivering Israel,* and *introducing a new law.* These characters agree only in the Messiah. The great difference was, that his *deliverance,* and his *law* were *universal,* and *perpetual*; those of Moses *local,* and *transitory.*

Is. xlii. 2. This prophecy sets the mildness, and quietness of the Messiah in opposition to the severe, and spirited character of the prophets.

wait

Is. xi. 3. *wait for his law.*——He ſhall not judge after the *ſight of his eyes*, neither reprove after the *hearing of his ears;* but with *righteouſneſs ſhall he judge the poor;* and *reprove with equity:* and he ſhall ſmite the earth with the *rod of his mouth;* and with the *breath of his lips ſhall he ſlay the wicked* †. Righteouſneſs ſhall be the girdle of his loins; and faithfulneſs the girdle
Is. lxi. 1. of his reigns.——The *Spirit of the Lord* is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to *preach good tidings* unto the meek. He hath ſent me to *bind up the broken-hearted*—to proclaim *liberty to the captives*, and the *opening of the priſon* unto them that are *bound*—to proclaim the *acceptable*
Mic. iv. 2. *year of the Lord.*——And *many nations* ſhall come, and ſay, Come, let us go up to the *mountain of the Lord*, and to the *houſe of the God of Jacob;* and he will teach you *his ways*, and we will walk in *his paths:* for *the Lord ſhall go forth out of Sion*, and the *word of the Lord from Jeruſalem.*——
Is. viii. 14. He ſhall be a *ſtone of ſtumbling*, and a *rock of offence* to *both the houſes of*
Pſ. cxviii. 22. *Iſrael.*——This is the *Lord's doing;* and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the *day*, which *the Lord* hath made; we will rejoice, and be
Is. xxviii. 16. glad.——Behold I lay *in Sion, a foundation-ſtone;* a tried ſtone; a precious corner-ſtone; a ſure foundation; he that *believeth*, ſhall not *be confounded.*
Is. xxix. 14. ——I will do a marvellous work among this people. The *wiſdom of their wiſe men* ſhall *periſh;* and the *underſtanding* of their *prudent men*
Zech. ix. 9. ſhall be *hid.*——Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion. Shout, O daughter of Jeruſalem. Behold thy king cometh unto thee. He is juſt; and having ſalvation; lowly; and *riding upon an aſs*, and a colt the foal of
Hag. ii. 7, 9. an aſs. I will fill this houſe with glory, ſaith the Lord of hoſts. The *glory of this latter houſe* ſhall be greater than the *former*; and in *this* place
Is. xxxv. 5. will I give *peace*, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.——Then ſhall the *eyes of the blind* be opened, and the *ears of the deaf* ſhall be unſtopped. Then ſhall the *lame* man leap as a hart; and the *tongue of the dumb* man ſhall ſing.
Is. xlii. 7. ——He ſhall bring out the *priſoners*, and them that ſit *in darkneſs*, out

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* That is, he ſhall not take cognizance of actions from his ſenſes; nor according to outward appearance.

† That is, the doctrine which he preaches ſhall make the eternal ſeparation of good, and bad.

Is. xxxv. 5. It is obſerved, that no prophet wrought ſuch miracles, as theſe; but Chriſt.

Is. xlii. 7. The idea of a priſon, and priſoners, is very often applied to a ſtate of heatheniſm.

of

Is. xlix. 9. of the prison-house. He shall say to the *prisoners*, Go forth; to them
Is. xl. 11. that sit in *darkness*, Shew yourselves.——He shall *feed his flocks* like a
shepherd. He shall gather the lambs with his arms; and carry them
Is. xlix. 10. in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.——They
shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat, nor the sun smite
them; for he that hath mercy on them, shall lead them: even by the
springs of water shall he guide them. They shall feed in the ways; and
their pasture shall be in all high places.

SECTION IV.

Containing such prophecies as relate to the *death*, *resurrection*, and *exaltation* of the Messiah.

Ps. xli. 9. Yea, even mine own *familiar friend*, in whom I trusted; who did
Zech. xi. 12. also eat of my bread, hath laid great *wait* for me.——And I said, If ye
think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed
for my price *thirty pieces of silver*, and I cast them to the potter in the
Zech. xiii. 7. house of the Lord.——*Smite* the *shepherd*, and the *sheep* shall be *scattered*.
Is. liii. 7. ——He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he *opened not his mouth*:
he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers
is *dumb*, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison, and
Ps. xxxv. 11. from judgment: and who shall declare his generation?——False witnesses
did rise up against me; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.
Ps. xxxviii. 13. As for me, I was like a deaf man, and heard not; and as one that is dumb,
Ps. xxii. 16. and doth not open his mouth.——Many *dogs* are come about me, and
Is. l. 6. the counsel of the wicked hath inclosed me.——I gave my *back to the*
smiters, and my *cheeks* to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my
Mic. v. 1. face from shame and *spitting*.——They shall *smite* the judge of Israel
Ps. lxix. 21. with *a rod upon the cheek*.——They gave me *gall* to eat; and when I was
Ps. xxii. 17. thirsty, they gave me *vinegar* to drink. They *pierced* my *hands* and my

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Ps. xxii. 16. This prophecy is descriptive of the Messiah's being put into the hands of the *heathen*. The word *dog* was universally applied by the Jews to the heathen. Thus our Saviour too applies it. See Matt. xv. 26.

feet. They *parted my garments* among them and *caſt lots upon my veſture.*—
Zech. xiii. 6. And one ſhall ſay, What are theſe *wounds in thine hands?* Then he ſhall anſwer, Thoſe, with which I was wounded in the houſe of my friends.——
Pſ. xxii. 1. My God, my God, look upon me; why haſt thou forſaken me?—All they that go by *laugh me to ſcorn:* they ſhoot out their lips; and ſhake their heads ſaying, *He truſted in God to deliver him; let him deliver him, if*
Joel ii. 30. *he will have him.*——I will ſhew wonders in the heavens, and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of ſmoke. The *ſun* ſhall be turned into *darkneſs*, and the moon into blood, before the great, and terrible day of the Lord come: and it ſhall come to paſs, that whoever ſhall call on
Dan. ix. 24. the name of the Lord, ſhall be ſaved.——Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to *finiſh the tranſgreſſion*, and to *make an end of ſins*, and to make *reconciliation for iniquity*, and to bring in *everlaſting righteouſneſs*, and to ſeal up the viſion and prophecy, and to *anoint the moſt Holy.* Know therefore and underſtand, that from the going forth of the commandment to reſtore, and to build Jeruſalem unto the Meſſiah the Prince, ſhall be ſeventy weeks; and three-ſcore and two weeks the ſtreets ſhall be built again, and the wall even in troublous times. And after threeſcore and two weeks ſhall *Meſſiah be cut off*, but *not for himſelf.*
Iſ. liii. 4. ——Surely he hath *born our griefs*, and *carried our ſorrows:* yet we did eſteem him ſtricken, ſmitten of God, and afflicted. But he was *wounded for our tranſgreſſion;* he was *bruiſed for our iniquities:* the chaſtiſement of *our* peace was upon *him;* and with *his* ſtripes *we* are healed. All we like ſheep have gone aſtray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on *him* the *iniquity of us all.* It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him: he hath put him to grief. Thou ſhalt make his *ſoul an offering for ſin.* He hath poured out his ſoul unto death. He was *numbered with the tranſgreſſors;* and he ſhall bear the *ſins of many;* and make *interceſſion*
Zech. xii. 10. *for tranſgreſſors:*——And I will pour out upon the houſe of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, the Spirit of grace, and of ſupplications: and *they ſhall look* upon *him, whom they have pierced*, and they ſhall mourn
Ex. xii. 46. for him, as one mourneth for an only ſon.——A *bone* of him ſhall *not be*
Zech. xiii. 1. *broken.*——In that day there ſhall be a *fountain opened* to the houſe of David, and to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem for *ſin*, and for *uncleanneſs.*——
Iſ. liii. 9. He made his *grave with the wicked*, and with the *rich in his death.*——

Why

Pſ. ii. 1. Why do the heathen ſo furiouſly rage together? The kings of the earth ſtand up; the *rulers take counſel againſt the Lord,* and againſt his *anointed*—He that dwelleth in heaven ſhall laugh them to ſcorn. The
Pſ. xvi. 11. Lord ſhall have them in deriſion.——Thou ſhalt not leave my *ſoul* in
Hoſ. vi. 2. *hell;* neither ſhalt thou ſuffer thine *holy One* to ſee *corruption.*——After two days he will revive us, on the *third day* he will *raiſe us up,* and we
Job xix. 25. will live in his ſight.——I know that my *redeemer liveth,* and that he
Hoſ. xiii. 14. ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth.——I will ranſom *them from the power of the grave:* I will *redeem* them from *death.* O death, I will
Pſ. cx. 1. be thy plague: O grave, I will be thy deſtruction.——The Lord ſaid unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footſtool. The Lord ſhall ſend the rod of thy power out of Sion: be thou ruler even in the midſt of thine enemies. In the day of thy power ſhall the people offer thee free-will offerings with a holy worſhip. The Lord ſware, and will not repent: Thou art a prieſt forever, after the order of Melchiſedec.

I ſhall conclude this whole collection of prophecies with an excellent paſſage from Biſhop Hurd's ſermons on prophecy.

" The argument from prophecy lies merely in the evidence pro-
" duced, that certain paſſages were delivered in the Old Teſtament;
" and have been fulfilled by certain correſpondent events related in the
" New. The argument doth in no degree depend on faith; but is cal-
" culated to produce it. It is equally ſtrong, or equally weak, to a

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Hoſ. vi. 2. In this paſſage, and in others, the prophets ſpeak in the plural: but it was a common idea to conſider Chriſt as riſing, accompanied with all the faithful. Thus St. Paul: *If we believe that Jeſus died and roſe again; even ſo them which ſleep in Jeſus, ſhall God bring with him.*

Pſ. cx. 1. The whole pſalm from whence this paſſage is taken, is commonly contraſted with the twenty-ſecond, which contains a full prophecy of the *humiliation* of Chriſt; as this does of his *exaltation.* They are both quoted in this light frequently by our Saviour, and his apoſtles.——The 72d and 89th pſalms ſeem to relate to the *eſtabliſhment of the Meſſiah's kingdom.* They are full of expreſſions, which cannot poſſibly relate to David; or to any other ſubject.

" Chriſtian, a Jew, or even an unbeliever—the ſole point in queſtion
" being this, whether ſuch things, as were prophetically delivered, ap-
" pear to have been fufilled—a point, on which common ſenſe, and
" common honeſty will equally decide, on every ſuppoſition."

Sermon V. p. 154.

END OF THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST.

PREFACE

TO

ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL.

WE know nothing certain of the hiſtory of St. Matthew, but what he himſelf, and the other evangeliſts, relate; which includes little more, than what paſſed during our Saviour's miniſtry. Where he lived afterwards—where he ſuffered martyrdom—or whether he ſuffered martyrdom at all—we have no accounts, that can be depended on.

Some commentators, both ancient and modern, are of opinion, that he wrote in Hebrew; and that the Greek we now have, is a tranſlation. But Dr. Lardner, on examining all the evidence, that hath been produced on both ſides, is of opinion, that St. Matthew's goſpel was moſt probably written in Greek*.

This goſpel is certainly the moſt circumſtantial account we have, of the tranſactions of our bleſſed Saviour. It hath alſo another advantage over St. Mark's goſpel, and St. Luke's—it was written by an eye-witneſs. It is therefore deſervedly placed at the head of the ſacred cannon; and, I ſhould think, hath a fairer title, than any other, to be the guide in all thoſe little variations, which we find among the evangeliſts.

One of the great peculiarities of this evangeliſt, is, the conſtant attention he pays to the completion of thoſe prophecies, which reſpected our bleſſed Saviour.

* See Lardner's Hiſt. of the apoſtles, and evangeliſts.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CIRCUMSTANCES of the birth of Jesus Christ, page 1.—The adoration of the Magi. 2.—Jesus carried into Egypt. 3.—Herod's cruelty. 3.—Jesus brought to Nazareth. 4.—John's appearance, and preaching. 4.—Jesus's baptism. 5—his temptation. 6—he begins his ministry. 9—chuses disciples. 9—performs several miracles. 10—his sermon on the mount. 11—he heals a leper. 18—heals a centurion's servant. 18—also Peter's mother-in-law, and other sick persons. 19—proves the insincerity of some pretended professors. 20—calms a storm. 20—heals two demoniacs in the country of the Gergesenes. 21—and a paralytic at Capernaum. 22—calls Matthew. 22—answers the disciples of John. 23—raises a young woman from the dead, and at the same time cures a bloody flux. 24—restores two blind men to sight. 24—cures a demoniac. 24—instructs, and sends out his disciples to preach. 25—John's mission to Jesus. Jesus's answer, and opinion of John. His exclamation over the Jewish cities. His prayer, and exhortation to his followers. 28.—The Pharisees attack Jesus for suffering his disciples to pluck corn on the sabbath. 30—and again on his healing a man with a withered hand. 31.—The quietness, as well as mercy, which accompanied the actions of Jesus. 31.—The Pharisees ascribe his casting out devils to a confederacy with devils. 32—they demand a sign from heaven. 34—Jesus points out, who are his nearest relations. 35.—The parable of the sower. 35—of the tares among the wheat; of the grain of mustard-seed; of leven in meal. 37.—Jesus explains to his disciples the parable of the tares among the wheat; and gives them different views of the gospel. 38—his treatment at Nazareth. 39.—Death of John the baptist. 40.—Jesus feeds a multitude. 41—makes a trial of Peter's faith, and stills a storm. 42—reproves the Pharisees, who

who had found fault with his not obſerving traditions; and ſhews the nature of true religion. 43—The faith of a Canaanitiſh woman. 45—Jeſus feeds a multitude a ſecond time. 46—refuſes to give the Phariſees a ſign from heaven; and guards his diſciples againſt their doctrines. 46—mentions to them his ſufferings. 48—raiſes their hopes with a viſion of his glorified ſtate. 49—heals a demoniac, and inſtructs his diſciples in faith. 51—reminds them again of his ſufferings. 52—pays the temple offerings. 52—inſtructs his diſciples in humility, and forgiveneſs. 53—The Phariſees endeavour to inſnare him with regard to divorces. 55—Jeſus bleſſes children. 56—The caſe of the young man who deſired to know, how to obtain eternal life. 56—State of the Jews and Gentiles repreſented in the parable of the maſter and his labourers. 58—The aſpiring deſigns of James and and John; and the heart-burnings of the reſt of the diſciples; which Jeſus repreſſes by leſſons of humility. 59—reſtores two blind men. 60—enters Jeruſalem, and drives the buyers and ſellers from the temple. 62—heals the ſick. 63—anſwers the chief prieſts. 63—ſhews the nature of faith from a barren fig-tree. 63—attacked by the Scribes and Phariſees, whom he reproves by the parable of the father, who had two ſons; and the houſeholder, who planted a vineyard. 64—and afterwards by the king, who made a marriage for his ſon. 66—The queſtion of tribute-money put to him. 67—Anſwers the Sadduces. 68—The great point of the law. 69—The Phariſees ſilenced, and rebuked. 69—Jeſus's diſcourſe with his diſciples on the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and the laſt judgment. 72—Conſultation of the chief prieſts. 79—Simon's ſupper. 79—Jeſus betrayed by Judas. 80—The paſſover, and laſt ſupper. 80—Peter's confidence checked. Jeſus's agony in the garden. 82—he is ſeized by his enemies. 3—carried before the high-prieſt, and examined. 84—Peter's denial. 85—Jeſus carried before Pilate. 86—Judas's repentance, and death. 86—Jeſus's trial. 87—he is delivered into the hands of the ſoldiers. 89—Circumſtances attending his death. 90—his burial. 92—Circumſtances attending his reſurrection. 92—his laſt interview with his diſciples. 93.

St. MATTHEW.

CHAP. I.

THE circumſtances, which attended the birth of Jeſus Chriſt, who ſprang in a direct line from David, were theſe. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19.

Joſeph, who had been betrothed to Mary, the mother of Jeſus, found her with child before their marriage: but being a compaſſionate man, and unwilling to treat her with ſeverity, he determined to break his engagements with her as privately as he could.

While his thoughts were employed on this ſubject, it pleaſed God to reveal to him in a viſion the whole myſterious event of

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1. *The book of the generations of Jeſus Chriſt.* This phraſe does not apply merely to the *genealogy*, but alſo to the *life and hiſtory* of Chriſt, as in Gen. vi. 9. *theſe are the generations of Noah*; under which title is exhibited his hiſtory as well as *family*.

1. The prophecies which declare Jeſus to be the ſon of David, are ſufficiently fulfilled, if Joſeph, his *reputed and legal father*, ſprang from that prince. And this, indeed ſeems to have been the idea of the angel, in his ſpeech to Joſeph, in which there is ſomething emphatical, *Joſeph* THOU SON OF DAVID *fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife.*—But for further ſatiſfaction with regard to the pedigree of Jeſus, ſee the notes on Luke ii. 4. and Luke iii. 23. The poſterity of David reigned in Judea, till the Babyloniſh captivity. After that event, the family of that prince fell into the utmoſt obſcurity. Still however they preſerved their pedigree, as all Jewiſh families did. The government after the return of the Jews from Babylon, fell into the hands of the prieſts, and the Maccabees; till Herod the Edomite was made king of Judea by the Romans.

18. Chriſt in Greek, ſignifies *anointed*, as *Meſſiah* does in Hebrew.

19. The Jewiſh law conſidered incontinence in a betrothed woman, in the light of adultery, and puniſhed it with death.

this holy birth; and to point out to him as a confirmation of what had been revealed, the prophecy of Iſaiah; *Behold a virgin*
CHAP. II. *ſhall conceive, and bring forth a ſon, who ſhall be called Immanuel,* or, *God with man.*

1. Joſeph, thus convinced of her innocence, and high exaltation, received her joyfully; but did not marry her, till after the birth of her ſon; whom he named Jeſus.

This extraordinary birth was publiſhed by the following event. Certain eaſtern Magi came to Jeruſalem; and inquired for the
2. king of the Jews, who was then juſt born; declaring they had ſeen a ſtar in their own country, which directed them to Judea.

The jealouſy of Herod, who reigned over the Jews at that time,
3. was excited by ſo uncommon an inquiry. He called the chief-prieſts
4 5. 6. 7. therefore together; and having been inſtructed by them, from the

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23. Iſaiah vii. 14. This verſe, and the following, according to our tranſlation, are inſerted as a remark of the evangeliſt's; but they are evidently a continuation of the angel's diſcourſe.

1. In many parts of Perſia, and Arabia, colleges of Magi were ſettled, who ſtudied aſtronomy, and other ſciences, and devoted themſelves to a purer religion, than was obſerved by any of their heathen neighbours. In theſe colleges many of the Jews reſided during the captivity. For the Magi adored one inviſible God, and probably made no objection to the Jewiſh mode of worſhip. Daniel was certainly at the head of ſome inſtitution of this kind; (Dan. v. 11.) and Elymas, who is improperly called a *ſorcerer*, was a Jewiſh Magus (Acts, xiii. 6.) Many learned men therefore have thought, that the Magi here mentioned, were probably Jews, or however Jewiſh proſelytes.

2. If the *ſtar* was the appearance of that divine light, which the Jews called the *Shekinah*, it was a ſign well adapted to *them*. If it had really the *appearance of a ſtar*, it was as well adapted to the *gentiles*, who had great faith in *ruling ſtars*, and conſidered a *new ſtar*, as a prognoſtic of the birth of a *great prince*.

3. This was Herod the great; many princes, of the name of Herod, reigned afterwards in Judea, which muſt be attended to, or it will create confuſion.

4. That is, he called together the heads of the ſeveral courſes of prieſts, as mentioned, I. Chron. xxiv. 4. &c.

6. *Bethlehem Judah*, and *Bethlehem Ephratah*, as it is called in Micah, (v. 2.) were the ſame place. This town is mentioned Gen. xxxv. 9. There was another town of the name of Bethlehem, belonging to the tribe of Zebulon.

prophets,

prophets, that Bethlehem was the place of the Meſſiah's birth, he gave this information to the Magi; with a private charge, that when they had found the prince, of whom they were in ſearch, they ſhould acquaint him with his place of reſidence, that he alſo might pay his devotion to him. 8.

Thus inſtructed the Magi purſued their journey to Bethlehem; and, to their great joy, ſaw the ſtar, which had led them from their own country, ſtill preceding them, till it ſtood over the houſe, where the holy child was born. 9, 10.

Having performed their devotions, and preſented gifts to him, after the manner of their country, they returned home: but by a different road; as they had been warned by God, in a viſion, to have no further intercourſe with Herod. 11, 12.

Soon after, Joſeph, on the ſame divine admonition, carried the holy child, and his mother, into Egypt, to avoid the wrath of Herod. Thus the words of the prophet Hoſea, which were applied firſt to the deliverance of the children of Iſrael from the bondage of that country, might alſo be applied to Chriſt; *Out of Egypt have I called my ſon.* 13. 14. 15.

Herod being thus diſappointed, in a violent rage, put to death all the children under two years of age in Bethlehem, and its neighbour- 16.

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11. It was a cuſtom in the eaſt, and ſtill prevails, to approach great people with preſents. Theſe preſents however were often of the moſt trifling nature; a flower, or an orange, was ſufficient. The very valuable preſents therefore which the Magi offered, notwithſtanding they found the child in ſo mean a condition, ſhewed the ſtrong ideas, with which they were impreſſed of his dignity.

15. Hoſea xi. 1.

16. Macrobius, a heathen author, who lived about the end of the fourth century, mentions this maſſacre. Auguſtus, ſays he, having been informed, that Herod had ordered a ſon of his own to be killed, among ſome children, whom he had put to death in Syria, ſaid (in alluſion to the prohibition of ſwine's fleſh among the Jews) that, *it was better to be Herod's hog, than his ſon.* The emperor, according to Macrobius's quotation, ſeems to have played upon the words; it was better to be Herod's υν, η υιον Saturn, II. 4.—Macrobius δ. fixes the fact in Syria properly enough, becauſe Judea was then a part of the province of Syria. See Tac. c. XII.

hood; concluding, that Jesus could not escape so general a slaughter.
17. 18. Then was *completely* fulfilled the prediction of Jeremiah: *In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing comfort because they were destroyed.*

19. 20. 21. 22. 23. After Herod's death, Joseph, by the direction of God, returned with the child into Judea: and afterwards on hearing that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod, retired to Nazareth in Galilee; from which town Jesus was called a *Nazarene*, or a *Nazarite*; conformably to the character, and office he bore, as foretold by the prophets.

CHAP. III.

1. About the 30th year of Jesus's life, which had thus far been spent in this obscure retreat, John the Baptist began to draw the attention of mankind. He preached in the desart country about Judea; declaring the approach of the Messiah; and persuading men to repent;

2. 3.

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18. Jer. xxxi. 15.

23. This is a difficult passage. It is not easy, in the first place, to point out the particular prophecy, to which the words, *he shall be called a Nazarene*, allude.

But secondly, if they refer, as is commonly supposed, to Judges xiii. 5. where it is said of Sampson, that he shall be *a Nazarite from the womb*, it is as difficult to apply them. A *Nazarite*, from a Hebrew word, which signifies *to separate*, was a person dedicated to God by some particular ceremonies, and for some particular purpose. Such a person was Sampson, who was appointed to deliver the children of Israel from the Philistines. And indeed Sampson seems to be no improper type of Christ, as by *his single power* he effected that deliverance.— But then how comes it that St. Matthew says, Christ received the appellation of a *Nazarite*, not from his being thus *separated*, but from his living *at Nazareth*, which has nothing to do with the profession of a *Nazarite*, nor is in any way connected with it, except in the similarity of the name? It seems to me, tho I dare not lay much stress on the interpretation, that the Evangelist's meaning is this.

Jesus, who was *in fact a Nazarite*, in the strictest sense of the word, and according to all the predictions of the prophets, did not however receive the appellation from his conforming to the Levitical law, but was called a *Nazarene* or *Nazarite*, merely from his having spent the greatest part of his life at *Nazareth*. So that from this *accidental circumstance*, he received that name, which was, in so appropriated a manner, due to him from his *office*.

agreeably

agreeably to the prophecy of Iſaiah, *The voice of one crying in the wilderneſs, prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths ſtraight.*

This extraordinary perſon appeared with great ſtrictneſs of life. 4.
His raiment was a mantle of the coarſeſt hair, tied round him with a leathern girdle; and his food, ſuch only as the deſert afforded.

His fame as a prophet, and a teacher, ſoon drew a numerous com- 5. 6.
pany around him; who being convinced by his doctrine, confeſſed their ſins, and were baptized.

Among others, who attended him, John obſerved many of the 7.
Scribes and Phariſees; and knowing probably, they came either out of pride or curioſity; or perhaps truſting only in outward obſervances, he accoſted them with ſome ſeverity:

"Perverſe men, cried he, ſearch your hearts, and find what mo-
"tives have brought you here. If indeed you are in earneſt, let your
"lives ſhew it. It is not your deſcent from Abraham, that can ſave 8. 9.
"you. Other children will ſoon be multiplied unto Abraham. The 10.
"end of the Jewiſh law is approaching. A kingdom of righteouſ-
"neſs will ſoon be eſtabliſhed; to which my office is a preparation. 11.
"The Meſſiah's ſuperior power will baptize you with the holy ſpirit
"of God. His religion will try the hearts of men; and open in a 12.
"new manner, the eternal conſequences of their actions."

While John was thus preaching to the people, Jeſus himſelf 13.
came to him to be baptized. But John with great humility, refuſed 14.

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4. It is ſomewhat remarkable, that Elijah the prophet, in *whoſe ſpirit, and power John the baptiſt came*, is deſcribed in ſcripture in this very dreſs. *He was a hairy man*, (dreſſed in a mantle of hair, or ſkin) *and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins.* 2 Kings. i. 8.——There is much diſpute about the meaning of the word *locuſt*; but as we know from Pliny (lib. VII. c. 30) that the inſect of that name, was dried, and uſed as food in the eaſt, we have great reaſon to ſuppoſe, that this inſect is meant.

5. The prophetic office had now ceaſed, ſince the days of Malachi, who lived near 400 years before Chriſt: ſo that a perſon of John's extraordinary appearance, who took on him the name of a prophet, drew great attention from the people.

7. See Mark vii. 1——14.

12. The word *fire* is uſed in ſcripture, both as the *ſymbol of purity*, and as the *inſtrument of vengeance.* The Talmudiſts ſay, that angels bathe themſelves in rivers of fire.

to

13. 14. 15. to baptize a perſon ſo much his ſuperior; till Jeſus informed him, that it was a neceſſary preparation to his public appearance in the
16. world. The ceremony was then performed; and God was pleaſed to cloſe it with a miracle. The clouds breaking, as Jeſus aſcended from the water, a divine light was ſhed abroad, which hung hovering over him: while an awful voice, from the midſt of the illumination, proclaimed, "*This is my beloved ſon, in whom I am well pleaſed.*"

CHAP. IV. 1. One thing more remained, before Jeſus made his public appearance in the world. It pleaſed God to ſhew, that, that Saviour, who was to die for ſin, was himſelf free from ſin: and that he, who was to ſuccour his faithful ſervants in temptation, both knew what temptation was; and was himſelf beyond its power†.

With this view Jeſus retired, under the guidance of the ſpirit, into
2. the wilderneſs; where undergoing a long faſt, as the great prophets of the law, Moſes, and Elijah had formerly done, be began to faint. At

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16. There is no mention made of *a light:* but the *opening of the heavens* plainly ſuggeſts that idea; eſpecially as on other occaſions, theſe miraculous communications were attended with a light; as in the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon the apoſtles; and in the converſion of St. Paul. It was probably that divine appearance, which the Jews called the Shechinah.—*The bodily appearance of a dove* is generally, and juſtly exploded by almoſt all commentators. Ωσει περιστεραν may as properly be tranſlated, *in the manner of a dove.* The *mode* of flying in this bird is peculiarly beautiful. It ſeems to have ſtruck Virgil:

——————Aere lapſa quieto
Radit iter liquidum, celeres neque commovet alas.

* Hebr. ii. 18. † Hebr. iv. 15.

1. The wilderneſs here mentioned, is ſuppoſed to be that wild deſert country, of which Mr. Maundrel, (p. 79.) whoſe account I abridge, gives the following deſcription.

"From this place we proceeded in an intricate way, among hills, and vallies, all of a "very barren aſpect at preſent; though diſcovering evident ſigns of culture in ancient times. "In a few hours we arrived at that mountainous deſert, in which our Saviour was tempted. It "is a miſerable, dry, barren ſcene, conſiſting of high rocky mountains, ſo torn, and diſ-"ordered, as if the earth had ſuffered ſome great convulſion. As we looked down a valley on "the

At that critical moment, the tempter appearing before him, made his firſt application to the neceſſities of his nature. "If you be the Son of God, ſaid he, command theſe ſtones to be made bread." Jeſus gave his anſwer a ſpiritual turn, implying, that mere earthly food was not ſo neceſſary to man, as the heavenly food of religion, and truth; and that man ought always to depend, in his exigencies, on the divine providence of God. On this anſwer, the devil framed his ſecond temptation. Having raiſed the appearance of the temple of Jeruſalem,

3. 4. 5.

"the left, we ſaw ſome ruins of cottages, which we were told, were formerly the habitations "of hermits. From theſe high grounds we had a delightful proſpect over the plains of Jeri-"cho, the dead ſea, and the mountains of Arabia. On deſcending into the plain, we ſoon "came to the foot of mount Quarantania, which we were informed, is the mountain, from "whence the devil tempted our Saviour with the viſionary ſcene of all the kingdoms of this "world. It is, as St. Mathew calls it, *an exceeding high mountain:* and in its aſcent, dif-"ficult, and dangerous. On the top of it ſtands a ſmall chapel; and half way up the aſcent, "another on the prominent ledge of a rock. On the ſide of the mountain alſo, are ſeveral "caves, in which hermits uſed formerly to keep their lent. In theſe caves we found ſmall bo-"dies of Arabs, quartered, with fire-arms; who demanded 200 dollars for permitting us to "climb the mountain; which was a greater ſum than we choſe to give."

3. Some commentators have reſolved this whole account of our Saviour's temptation into an allegory, or viſion: but I know not, on what grounds, except its being accompanied with ſome difficulties, which we cannot eaſily ſolve; and this would be as good a reaſon for turning any part of ſcripture which we happen to miſlike, into an allegory. The *figurative ſtyle* of ſcripture is a different thing. Common ſenſe tells us, that when our Saviour ſpeaks of *cutting off a right hand*, or *plucking out a right eye*, he could only mean *renouncing our bad deſires*. But when the account of a tranſaction is given in a plain hiſtorical manner, we are not certainly to apply the ſame rule to *fact*, which we may allowedly apply to *ſtyle*. This paſſage of ſcripture, no doubt, has its difficulties. I have prefaced the account of it with a few conjectures at the deſign, and intention of it; which yet ſeem to be founded on ſcriptural authority.

4. In this anſwer Jeſus alluded to Deut. viii. 3.

5. Though I cannot conſider the temptation of Chriſt as an allegory; yet I own, I am much inclined to ſuppoſe the wilderneſs to be the *only ſcene* of the whole tranſaction. The idea of ſuppoſing the devil to carry our Saviour to Jeruſalem, appears to me much harſher, than to ſuppoſe him capable of raiſing an illuſive ſcene, like Jeruſalem. The Evangeliſts are never exact in trivial circumſtances; but keep the main point in view; and it is, in fact, of no conſequence, with regard to the temptation, whether the ſcene were real, or illuſive. St. Luke's ex-

6. Jeruſalem, he placed Jeſus on one of its battlements: and wiſhed him, if he thus truſted in the mercies, and providence of God, to make a trial. Throw yourſelf down, ſaid he, from this height, and ſee whether that God, in whom you truſt, will ſend his angels, as it is writ-
7. ten, to ſuſtain you from harm. Jeſus anſwered in a paſſage from Moſes, intimating that we ought not to try any unneceſſary experiments of God's power in our preſervation: but that it was enough to rely on
8. 9. him in all unavoidable difficulties. The devil being thus foiled in his firſt attempts on Jeſus, endeavoured next to find out, whether there were in him any latent ſparks of ambition, or love of pleaſure; and placing him on a high mountain; Look round, ſaid he, from this lofty ſtand: See all the kingdoms of the earth ſpread before you—all their wealth—all their glory—and all their pleaſures—all is mine, and ſhall be yours,
10. 11. if you will only give up your truſt in God; and place it in me. This was too great an indignity for Jeſus to bear. He rebuked the devil

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expreſſion, *he ſhewed him all the kingdoms of the world, in a moment of time*, rather leads to the ſuppoſition of an *ideal ſcene*. Moſt interpreters underſtand by πασας τα; βασιλεια; τη; οικουμενη;, only the country of Judea. The word οικουμενη *alone*, no doubt, ſometimes has that interpretation; but in *conjunction* with the other words it is here joined with, I think, it is a ſtronger expreſſion, than ſuch an interpretation warrants; and the words, *in a moment of time*, gives it ſtill more the air of an *illuſive ſcene*.

If then we admit *one* repreſentation to be illuſive, we may ſuppoſe the *other* to have been ſo likewiſe: nor is it more improbable, that the devil ſhould raiſe a ſcene like *the holy city, and the temple*; than like *all the kingdoms of the earth*.—What the devil's power was, before Chriſtianity, we know not; but we are led, from the conſideration of oracles, and poſſeſſions, to believe it greater, at leaſt more oſtenſible, than it has been ſince. Perhaps when our Saviour ſays, *He ſaw Satan, as lightning, fall from heaven*, he ſpeaks of this abridgment of his power.

6. The devil, in this temptation, would perſuade our Saviour to an act of diſtruſt under the idea of divine confidence: he was to caſt himſelf down to ſee, whether the Lord could or would preſerve him. To which our Saviour anſwers, Thou ſhalt not tempt, or try the Lord thy God: but what he orders thee to do, do without diſtruſt. Some have ſuppoſed, that the devil, knowing the character of Chriſt, quoted ſcripture out of artifice, the more to deceive him.

with

with authority, and ſent him away; on which angels came, and miniſtred unto him.

In theſe ſolitary regions, Jeſus had now ſpent ſome time, when hearing of the impriſonment of John, he returned to Nazareth: and from thence proceeded to Capernaum, a town of ſome reſort, ſeated on the lake of Geneſareth †. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17.

At this place he began his miniſtry; and thus completely fulfilled the prophecy of Iſaiah ‡; *The land of Zabulon, and Napthalin, by the way of the ſea, beyond Jordan—Galilee of the gentiles* §—*the people, which ſat in darkneſs ſaw a great light; and to them, which ſat in the region, and ſhadow of death, light is ſprung up.*

At the time, when Jeſus entered on his miniſtry, he began to chuſe certain diſciples, to be the witneſſes of his life and doctrine. He firſt choſe two brothers, Peter and Andrew, inhabitants of Capernaum; whom he found following their calling as fiſhermen, on the lake; and ſoon afterwards, James, and John, two other brothers, who were fiſhermen likewiſe. All four immediately left their friends and occupation, and followed him. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22.

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† This lake is called alſo *the ſea of Galilee*, and the *lake of Tiberias*. It was called the lake of Tiberias from a town of that name, which was ſeated on it's weſtern ſhore. Near this town Herod had a palace, and beautiful hanging gardens running along the banks of the lake; from which gardens ſome derive the name *Geneſareth*. Others ſuppoſe it to have been a corruption of the ancient *Cinnereth*, ſpoken of in Numb. xxxiv. 11.

17. From the mention of the impriſonment of John, juſt before Jeſus aſſumed his public character, we are rather led to ſuppoſe the evangeliſt might imply, that Jeſus began his own miniſtry, about the time that John concluded his. This idea ſeems confirmed by Mar. i. 14.

‡ Iſ. ix. 1.

§ The whole of Galilee was, in fact, Jewiſh land; but the upper part of it was ſo much frequented by the heathen nations, that bordered on it, that it obtained the name of *Galilee of the Gentiles*.

21. Zebedee, the father of James, and John, does not ſeem to have been a perſon in the loweſt circumſtances. He had a boat, and nets, and hired ſervants. The two brothers therefore not only left a calling, but a gainful one, which they ſeem to have had the means of carrying on with credit.

23. Accompanied by these attendants, he went through Galilee, preaching in the synagogues, and confirming his divine authority by miraculously healing the sick.

24. 25. His fame soon spread throughout all parts: numbers of diseased folks were brought to him; and multitudes of people attended all his motions.

CHAP. V. 1. 2. Having laid a sufficient foundation for their faith by his miracles, he thought it right to open next the great truths of his religion. And

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23. We shall find our Saviour's miracles, as we proceed in the history, not only *confirming*, but *illustrating* his divine authority. His giving sight to the blind illustrated his power to illuminate the prejudiced minds of men—his healing their bodies shewed his power to heal their souls, and forgive their sins—his casting out devils displayed his final victory over the devil—and his raising the dead, his power to accomplish a general resurrection.—This places them in a stronger, and more beautiful light, than when they are considered only as acts of beneficence, or proofs of authority.

And yet some writers, I think, carry the allegory too far. Many of our Saviour's miracles, no doubt, admit of very beautiful allegory, as when St. Peter was called from the boat; (see a note on Mat. xiv. 25.) and when the blind man was sent to wash in the pool of Siloam; (see a note on John ix. 7.) but it is rather forced, when a writer sits down on set purpose, as some have done, to draw every thing into allegory. It was, no doubt, the *primary* intention of the miracles of our blessed Saviour, to authenticate his divine commission. Both he, and his apostles constantly appeal to them as such. Every thing else is of *secondary* consideration.—With regard to our Saviour's healing the sick, it hath been observed, that he healed no disorders, but such as were of themselves incurable. This I think, is not the fact; a *fever*, for instance, is a curable disorder; and so is a *leprosy*, as may be supposed from the legal purgation appointed for it. The stress therefore is laid by these interpreters on the wrong point. The miracle did not consist in the *kind of disorder* cured; but in the *instantaneous manner* in which the cure was effected.

1. It is evident the *people in general* (who are called here his *disciples*) were his audience; both from the 28th verse of the 7th chapter; and from the account which St. Luke gives us, ch. vii. 1.—Tho some parts of this discourse seem particularly addressed to his immediate followers; the great intention of it, seems to have been, to settle the opinions of the people with regard to the nature of the Messiah's kingdom. Our Saviour shews it to be very different from what, it is probable, they had conceived.——Dr. Lardner is of opinion (See his Credib. Part II, ch. 36.) that this discourse was delivered at various times; and that we are to look in St. Luke for the occasions of the several parts of it. Other interpreters think there,

And that he might be heard with more eaſe, he aſcended a riſing ground, and delivered his firſt diſcourſe to the people in the following manner.

He began by pronouncing a bleſſing on ſeveral characters, diſpoſitions, and ſituations in life, which are in general treated with the greateſt neglect.

Bleſſed, ſaid he, are the humble and lowly-minded, who neither 3.
value themſelves on their attainments, nor on the advantages of the world. Theſe alone are truly diſpoſed to embrace my religion.

Bleſſed are they, who having diſengaged themſelves from the in- 4.
dulgences, and vanities of life, paſs through it in that ſerious manner, that becomes a ſtate of trial. Their ſelf-denial here ſhall be their comfort hereafter.

Bleſſed are the meek, the gentle, and inoffenſive. Their happineſs 5.
in this world, is an earneſt of that bleſſing, which ſhall attend them in the next.

Bleſſed are they, who have formed ſuch a habit of piety in their 6.
minds, that it acts ſpontaneouſly, like their appetites. This is the greateſt height of religious attainment.

Bleſſed is the humane and merciful man. His mercy to others, 7.
will, in time of need, call down mercy on himſelf.

Bleſſed are they, whoſe hearts and affections are cleanſed from im- 8.
purity. Such heavenly minds alone have intercourſe with God.

Bleſſed are they, who are not ſatisfied with a mere inoffenſive be- 9.
haviour in themſelves; but endeavour to promote peace among others. Theſe are the true children of the goſpel.

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there is little ground for this opinion, as Luke is generally eſteemed more immethodical, than any of the other Evangeliſts—as he wrote from *what had been delivered unto him from eye witneſſes*—as Matthew was himſelf an apoſtle—and laſtly as there may be traced a very evident connection through all the parts of this diſcourſe.

10. 11. 12. Bleſſed are they, who are ill-treated, reviled, and perſecuted for the ſake of religion. Thus of old the prophets were perſecuted; in whoſe reward, as well as ſufferings, they ſhall partake.

13. 14. 15. 16. You, who are intended to be the preachers of my religion, like ſalt, ſhall purify a corrupt world. But you muſt firſt be pure yourſelves. You are like a city built on a hill, which is conſpicuous to all. You are the light of the world. Let that light ſhine for the benefit of others.

17. Do not however imagine, that my inſtitutions are intended to overturn the law, and the prophets, which you have thus far been taught
18. to reverence. By no means. It is my buſineſs, and intention to ful-
19. fil every tittle of the moral and ceremonial law: and he who hath obſerved both the moſt religiouſly; is the beſt qualified to receive the
20. goſpel. So far indeed am I from deſtroying the moral law; that I mean

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13. The figure here is exceedingly bold, Εαν μωρανθη τοαλας: if the *ſalt be infatuated.*—The ancients uſed rock, or foſſil ſalt, which was much more ſubject to impurities, than the ſalt we uſe. Mr. Maundrel very well illuſtrates this paſſage by the account he gives us of the *valley of ſalt*, near Aleppo. "There is a ſmall precipice, ſays he, occaſioned by the continual taking away of the ſalt. In this you may diſcover the veins of it lying. I broke off a piece, which having been expoſed to the ſun, rain, and air, had entirely *loſt its ſavour*; tho it had the ſparks, and particles of ſalt. The inner parts retained their ſavour."

14. Sir Iſaac Newton, and others, have ſuppoſed, that our bleſſed Saviour, on this, and other occaſions, alluded to objects before him: and Mr. Maundrel ſpeaks of a town, called *Saphet*, imagined to be the ancient *Bethuliah*, which was eaſily ſeen from what is called the *mount of the Beatitudes*.

16. It is probable, that in this paſſage, the *doctrine* of the apoſtles is meant by the *ſalt*; and their *example*, by the *city on a hill*, and the *candle on a candle-ſtick*.

18. Κεραια, which is tranſlated *tittle*, ſignifies the ornamental part of a letter, which was uſed, when Hebrew was elegantly written.

20. As far as we can judge from this, and the following paſſages, the Phariſees had greatly corrupted the ſpirit of the law; and taught, at leaſt by their example, that its precepts extended only to outward actions—that a regard for the ceremonial part would excuſe the moral—and that ſome important privileges, were connected with a deſcent from Abraham. All theſe notions our Saviour refutes.

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mean to exalt, and perfect it. He therefore who shall take his measure of perfection, from the bare letter of it, as taught by the Scribes, and Pharisees; or from their glosses upon it, shall in no degree be qualified for my kingdom. 21. 22. The sixth commandment, for instance, hath been commonly limited by the Jewish doctors to murder: but my institution supposes every man to incur guilt, who even in his thoughts is at enmity with his neighbour. Be assured 23. 24. therefore that no religious services, accompanied with a malicious heart, 25. 26. can be acceptable to God. As it is an easier matter to make up a quarrel at first, than when is carried to extremity; so the dreadful consequences, that follow the breach of this commandment, are best prevented by rooting out at once every malicious tendency.

Again, the Jewish doctors confine the seventh commandment to the 27. crime of adultery. But my institutions go farther. They set a 28. guard upon the heart. The *impure thought*, when cherished, becomes 29. 30. guilt: and every impurity, however natural and constitutional it may

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The hypocritical pretences of the Pharisees had however gained so much credit with the people, that it was proverbial among the Jews, *That if two men only should enter the kingdom of heaven, one of them would be a Scribe, and the other a Pharisee.* Great therefore must be the surprise of our Saviour's hearers, when they found these very persons marked out of all others as the least qualified to enter the kingdom of heaven.

21. The climax here is this: If you are *angry* with your brother without a cause, it is wrong. If you call him *raca*, (a *vain light fellow*,) it is worse. If you call him a *wicked man* (which *fool* in the Jewish language signifies) it is worst of all. Some interpreters suppose, that μωρε, *fool* has crept into the text, instead of *morah*.

22. Philo (de Sacrif. 844.) observes, that when a man had injured his neighbour, and acknowledged the injury, he was first to make restitution, and then to present his sacrifice.—To this practice our Saviour seems to allude when he says, *Leave thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother; and then come, and offer thy gift.*—The expression *hell-fire* alludes to the *valley of Hinnon*, where the Israelites formerly had offered their children to Moloc; and in our Saviour's time, burnt the bones of sacrifices, and other rubbish from the city. As there was almost a constant fire there, they thought it illustrative of hell.

29. The word σκανδαλον properly signifies a *stumbling block*. Our Saviour therefore considers every thing, that *obstructs religion*, as something *laid in its way*.

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31. 32. be ſuppoſed, muſt be rooted out. Thus alſo, in the matter of divorce, great liberty hath been taken under the law: but my inſtitution forbids divorce on any account, except adultery: it calls him an adulterer, who puts away his wife, and marries another; and her an adultereſs, who marries, after ſhe is thus put away.

33. Again, the Jewiſh doctor, gloſſing on the third commandment, injoins you religiouſly to perform whatever you have bound yourſelf
34. 35. 36. 37. to by an oath. But my inſtitution totally forbids the uſe of oaths in common converſation, either by the Creator—or by the creature; allowing only a bare affirmation or denial.

38. 39. 40. 41. 42. Again, the law of retaliation demands *an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.* My inſtitutions forbid this rigour; and on every occaſion preſcribe a kind, and gentle behaviour—a willingneſs to give—and a willingneſs to forgive—a readineſs to part with ſomething even of your juſt right for the ſake of peace.

43. Among the gloſſes on the law, you have heard it ſaid, *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.* My directions are different.
44. 45. 46. 47. 48. Your enemy, whoever he be, is the creature of that God, who regards all mankind with an equal eye of tenderneſs, and mercy. The Phariſee conſiders the kindneſs of others to him, as the meaſure of his kindneſs to them. Do you imitate the boundleſs mercies of that gracious Father, *who maketh his ſun to ſhine on the evil, and on the good; and ſendeth rain on the juſt, and on the unjuſt.*

CHAP. VI. Devote yourſelf, and all your actions to God. Sanctify every duty
1. 2. 3. 4. by referring it to him. If you give alms through a motive of vanity; the praiſe of men is your reward. But if you ſeek for the approba-

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32. See Mat. xix. 9. Mark x. 11. Luke xvi. 18.

37. Bowyer conjectures, that this paſſage ſhould be pointed thus: Ο λογος υμων ναι; ναι: ου; ου. Is your ſpeech affirmative? Let it be affirmative. Is it negative? Let it be negative.

43. The latter part of this gloſs, *Thou ſhalt hate thine enemy,* is not found in the Jewiſh law; but was founded on thoſe peculiar ſeverities, which God for particular reaſons ordered againſt the Canaanites, &c.

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tion of God; give them ſecretly, and with a view only to pleaſe him.

Thus again, if you imitate the vain glorioufneſs of a hypocrite in your prayers; you ſhall receive only a hypocrite's reward, the praiſe of men. But the ſincerity of your ſecret prayers ſhall meet the acceptance of God.—To the uprightneſs of your heart attend, more than to the length of your petitions. God knows your wants: but he expects you to give him a teſt of your ſincerity. 5. 6. 7. 8.

In your prayers begin with an acknowledgment of praiſe to your heavenly father. Let the whole race of mankind be the next object of your petitions—pray, that the kingdom of righteouſneſs may overſpread the world—and that men may live in obedience to its laws on earth, as the bleſſed angels do in heaven. With regard to your temporal wants, pray only for the neceſſaries of life, or at leaſt with entire ſubmiſſion to the will of God.—With regard to your ſpiritual wants, pray for the forgiveneſs of your ſins: but be well aſſured, that you pray in the ſpirit of forgiveneſs to others. Intreat God to aſſiſt you in paſſing through the dangers, and temptations of this world; and conclude your petitions with expreſſing your truſt in his power, and goodneſs to grant all you aſk.—But I repeat to you, that you are by no means to expect forgiveneſs at God's hands, unleſs you forgive others, by rooting entirely out of your hearts all malicious, and revengeful thoughts. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15.

The ſame devotion to God, which ought to govern your alms, and your prayers, ought to govern alſo your religious auſterities. Whatever of this kind you practiſe on a worldly motive, meets only a worldly reward. It is *devoting the action to God*, which ſanctifies it in his ſight. 16. 17. 18.

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6. *Thy Father, which is in ſecret.* Theſe words with the omiſſion of the particle τῷ, which *is* omitted in ſome MSS. will be, *Pray in ſecret to thy Father.*

7. Perſeverance in prayer is often recommended; ſo that theſe *repetitions*, and *much ſpeaking*, muſt be ſomething different.

Thus

19. Thus ſpiritualizing your minds, conſider not your worldly goods as
20. your treaſures. They are liable to many accidents. But conſider the enjoyments of a bleſſed futurity alone in this light; which are the
21. only treaſures not ſubject to change. And of this be aſſured, that wherever your treaſure is, your heart and it will always be together.

22. 23. It is the worldly mind, which miſleads you. When your ſight is clear, your motions are properly directed: but when it is impaired, you are bewildered. Juſt ſo the mind. Cleanſe it from the love of earthly things; and it will of courſe be directed to heavenly.

24. Beſides the earthly mind is utterly *inconſiſtent* with religion. It is impoſſible to devote yourſelf, at the ſame time, to God and the world.

25. Be not therefore *ſolicitous* even about *neceſſary things*. That God,
26. who created you, will continue to preſerve you. That hand which feedeth the fowls of the air, will reach its protection to you. With-
27. out this protection even the moſt anxious of your endeavours would ſignify nothing. Conſider who cloaths the flowers of the field in all
28. 29. 30. that ſplendor, which no art can rival. Will he, think you, who
31. arrays the lily, neglect you? Be not then ſolicitous about the things of this life. Leave the ſolicitudes of the world to it's children. Let
32. 33. it be your care to practiſe the rules of religion; and your heavenly
34. Father, who knoweth your wants, will properly ſupply them. Let not the future therefore diſtreſs you: leave to-morrow to itſelf; and trouble not to-day with evils, which belong not to it.

CHAP. VII. But however pure you may ſuppoſe yourſelves, I forbid all raſh
1. 2. cenſures of others. The malicious detracting temper has little to ex-

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27. Ηλικια here ſignifies more properly *age*, than *ſtature*; and πηχυς is taken for a *ſhort duration*. *To add a cubit to a man's ſtature*, is a great thing; which the ſenſe rejects. See Wetſtein.

30. *Into the oven.* In the Eaſtern countries, fewel is often ſo ſcarce, that they burn dried graſs. Their great want of fireing was to ſupply their ovens.

34. No expoſition can do juſtice to the original in the concluding verſes of this chapter; but for the ſake of uniformity, I am obliged to modernize them.

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pect from the favour of God. Look rather at home; and try, 3, 4, 5.
whether you cannot find greater faults in your own hearts, than in
thoſe of your neighbours. Correct *yourſelves* therefore, before you pre-
ſume to cenſure *others*. And even in caſes, where it may be proper to 6.
cenſure; be prudently reſerved. Indiſcrete counſel injures both the
advice, and the adviſer.

But in this, and in every thing elſe, have recourſe to prayer, and 7, 8.
the aſſiſtance of God. He who prays earneſtly, may depend upon be-
ing heard. With what attention does the earthly father commonly 9, 10.
liſten to the requeſt of his child? And can you ſuppoſe, that your 11.
heavenly father will be leſs attentive?

Learn alſo, from God's kindneſs to you, to be at all times kind to 12.
your neighbour: and make it a rule in all *caſes, to do to others, what-
ever you might reaſonably expect them to do to you.* In obſerving this
rule you fulfil the law.

Thus the path, which I have marked out for you, is narrower than 13, 14.
that, in which the world commonly walks. But conſider the great
point to which it leads; and be not diſcouraged from purſuing it. 15.
Liſten not to thoſe falſe teachers, whoſe doctrines produce not a holy
life. As the fruit diſtinguiſhes the tree; ſo does a holy life, the 16, 17, 18,
teacher. A good teacher will as certainly ſhew his doctrine by his 19, 20.
holy life; as a good tree will produce good fruit: and that teacher,
who does not ſhew himſelf in this way, is of no more worth, than a
tree which bears bad fruit. It is not profeſſing the goſpel, nor diſ-
playing your gifts, and endowments, that will make you my diſciples. 21, 22, 23.
Be your profeſſions, or your gifts, what they may, if they are unac-
companied with good works, they belong not to my inſtitution.

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6. See Mat. x. 14. 16. Mark vi. 11. Luke ix. 5. and x. 11. Acts xiii. 51.

19. Bowyer conjectures this verſe to be an interpolation. It is properly introduced Mat. iii. 10. but here it certainly interrupts the argument, and the ſenſe. It introduces the *puniſhment*, when the argument proceeds only on the *inveſtigation*.

24, 25. He therefore, who having heard the gospel, conforms his practice to it, resembles that prudent man, who builds his house upon a rock. The rains, and storms, and floods may beat against it: but it
26, 27. is founded in security; and resists their force. While he, who leaves a good life out of his religion, forgets the foundation, and raises his house on the sand. The storms and floods arise: it is ill-founded, and is instantly beaten down.

28, 29. Thus Jesus concluded his divine discourse. And his hearers were struck with admiration; for they easily saw, that his preaching had a different tendency, and came accompanied with higher authority than that of the Scribes.

CHAP. VIII.

1, 2. On his descending the hill, where he had been teaching the people, he was met by a leper; who acknowledging his divine power,
3. begged his assistance with passionate exclamations. Jesus immediately embraced the opportunity, both of confirming his doctrines by a miracle, and of relieving the man's distress. He laid his hand there-
4. fore on the leper, and healing him with a word, ordered him not to speak of the matter: but to shew himself to the priests, who were appointed by the law as the proper judges of the reality of the cure.

As he entered Capernaum, a centurion belonging to a Roman garrison in the neighbourhood, met him, and besought him to heal his

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4. This caution, which our blessed Saviour generally shews, in ordering his miracles not to be divulged, is commonly attributed to his desire of avoiding all offence. If he had been solicitous to draw multitudes of people about him, they might often have been inclined to popular tumult. It is true, he might have avoided any thing of this kind by his divine power; but it was certainly more exemplary to his followers, to use common, prudential means, than to have recourse, on all occasions, to a miracle.—For the same reason it seems probable, that he did not openly profess himself to be the Messiah; but rather used such language, and wrought such miracles, as might convince all *well-disposed* persons of this great truth.——The expression *for a testimony unto them*, means, that the priests pronouncing the cure to be real, would give testimony to the people, that it was so.

4. See the law of leprosy, Levit. xiii. 13. and xiv. 4.

servant,

ſervant, who was ſtruck with a palſy. Jeſus deſirous of giving the 7.
Jews an inſtance of faith in a perſon, whom they deſpiſed as a heathen, told the officer, he would go home with him, and perform the
cure. The centurion, ſtruck with a ſenſe of his own inferiority, 8.
declared his unworthineſs of ſuch an honour; and deſired Jeſus to ſpeak a word only at that diſtance, and he had no doubt of it's effect.
Even I, ſaid he, who am only an inferior officer in an army, can by 9.
ſpeaking to thoſe under my command, execute what orders I pleaſe,
at a diſtance. Jeſus, turning round, expreſſed his admiration at this 10.
inſtance of faith, which he ſaid was greater, than he had found 11, 12.
even in Iſrael; intimating at the ſame time, that this was an earneſt of that great change, which ſhould ſpeedily take place; when the heathen ſhould be received into the favour of God; and the Jews
rejected for their infidelity. Then addreſſing himſelf to the centu- 13.
rion, and commending his faith, he told him that his ſervant was already healed: which on returning home, he found to be true.

At Capernaum Jeſus retired from the multitude into Peter's houſe;
and finding his wife's mother in a fever, he took her by the hand, 14.
and healed her inſtantly; ſo that ſhe was able to attend them at 15.
ſupper.

This miraculous cure being ſoon noiſed abroad, numbers of ſick, 16.
and diſeaſed people were brought to him in the evening, whom he
immediately healed; fulfilling by theſe acts of mercy, as well as by
his death, the prophecy of Iſaiah, *Himſelf took our infirmities, and* 17.

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13. *Simple faith*, which is often confounded with truſt, divine love, and other chriſtian graces, depends, no doubt, on evidence: but ſtill it is greatly in a man's own power to ſearch into evidence, and ſtrengthen his faith. A man may neglect the ſtrongeſt evidence, through ſelf-ſufficiency, and it may make no impreſſion upon him. Our Saviour therefore on this, and other occaſions, ſeems to conſider faith, in a great degree, in our own power; and lays that ſtreſs upon it, which in every religion, as well as the chriſtian, it deſerves; for no religion can take poſſeſſion of the conſciences of men, unleſs a belief in it be firſt firmly eſtabliſhed.

17. Iſa. liii. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 24.

18. *bare our ſicknesses.* But finding the multitude preſs upon him; and being ſpent with fatigue, he ordered his diſciples to provide a boat to carry him over the lake.

19, 20, 21, 22. On his embarking, he had an opportunity of proving the insincerity of ſome, who pretended to be his followers. They made zealous profeſſions; but it appeared, that it was either on the expectation of ſome temporal advantage; or with the view of mixing more of the world with their religion, than it allowed. When they found that all their hopes were referred to a future life, they thought it prudent to retire.

23, 24. Jeſus therefore and his diſciples embarked alone; but they had ſcarce gained the middle of the lake, when a violent guſt of wind aroſe, and endangered the ſafety of the veſſel. Jeſus himſelf was aſleep, taking that repoſe, which he had ſo long wanted. The
25. diſciples therefore in great terror, awoke him, imploring his aſſiſtance.
26, 27. Jeſus firſt rebuked their want of confidence in him; and then gave them a new inſtance of his miraculous power, by inſtantly calming the ſea.

28. As he landed on the other ſide of the lake, in the country of the Gergeſenes, two demoniacs met him, who frequented thoſe ſolitary

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22. *Let the dead bury their dead. Dead while ſhe liveth—dead, and is alive again—dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*—are all ſimilar modes of ſpeaking.

28. This is the firſt inſtance, that occurs of demoniacs; except, where they are mentioned, (v. 16.) in the aggregate. Some reſolve all theſe appearances into ordinary diſtempers; but I think this is rather a hardy expedient, and attended with greater difficulties, than it removes. What is ſaid againſt their reality is chiefly founded on their being very unlike any thing, which we meet with at preſent. But if we reaſon thus, we may deny, like the Sadducees, the exiſtence of angels—we may deny all ſuper-natural appearances of the divine preſence—and the whole economy of the Jewiſh theocracy—It ſeems ſafer, I think, and eaſier, to ſuppoſe (what indeed we have ſome grounds to believe from ſcripture) that the devil had, before the times of chriſtianity, at leaſt greater *viſible* power, than he has now. Indeed without ſuppoſing this, we cannot eaſily get rid of many difficulties in *profane hiſtory* with regard to oracles; nor of the poſſeſſions, mentioned by Joſephus, and other writers, as exiſting among the Jews.

regions,

regions, in which the Jews commonly made their tombs. Theſe men were ſo exceedingly fierce, that travellers durſt not paſs that road: yet on ſeeing Jeſus, the wicked agents that poſſeſſed them, were 29, 30, 31.
ſo terrified, that they cried out; calling him by his name—expreſſing their dread of puniſhment—and beſeeching him, if he caſt them out of the men, to ſuffer them to enter into a herd of ſwine, which was feeding at a little diſtance. Jeſus permitting them, the whole 32.
herd ruſhed violently down a precipice into the lake, and were deſtroyed. The keepers immediately flying into the city, and giving 33.
intelligence of what was done; the whole body of the people came 34.
out to Jeſus; and probably terrified by his power, deſired he would

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29. *What have we to do with thee?* Better rendered, *what haſt thou to do with us?*

32. There is not one of the miracles of our bleſſed Saviour, againſt which the cavils of infidelity have been more generally, and perhaps more ſucceſsfully, directed, than this. The *uſual anſwer* is, that our Saviour in fact, only *permitted* the devils to enter the ſwine, but that if he had even *authorized* them, it was juſtifiable; for if the *Jews* were the proprietors of theſe animals, they deſerved puniſhment for tranſgreſſing their law; and if the *Gentiles*, they equally deſerved it, for leading the Jews into temptation—But I cannot ſay, I am ſatisfied with this anſwer. There is ſomething in the whole tranſaction ſo contrary to the gentle ſpirit, both of the goſpel, and it's founder, that I own I ſhould rather wait for the time, when this, and other difficult points, ſhall receive that ſolution, of which I have not the leaſt doubt, they are fully capable. I am much of the opinion of honeſt Eraſmus, who in his dedication of the works of Hilary, ſays, "We may talk of referring difficulties to the next general "council; in my opinion, it would be better to refer them to that bleſſed time, when we ſhall "ſee God face to face."—Dr. Doddridge concludes his account of this miracle, with theſe pleaſing reflections.

"From this remarkable ſtory we have ſurely reaſon to adore the good providence of God, "who reſtrains the malignant ſpirits of hell from ſpreading theſe deſolations among men, and "beaſts, which would otherwiſe turn the earth into a wilderneſs. What matter of joy is it "to reflect, that all their fury, and rage is under a divine controul; and that they cannot "hurt even the meaneſt animal, without permiſſion from above."

34. It ſeems indeed from their deſiring him ſo humbly *to depart out of their coaſts*, that they conſidered this as a judgment upon them, and feared a greater, if he ſtayed; agreeably to that paſſage in Pſalm cv. 37. *Egypt was glad at their departing, for they were affraid of them.* If the Gergeſenes had not been affraid, they would not have *intreated* him, but would have *forced* him; or have attempted to puniſh him. St. Luke expreſsly ſays (viii. 27) *they were taken with great fear*; which could only be the fear of ſome greater judgement.

leave

CHAP. IX.

leave their coaſts. Seeing them therefore unprepared, at this time,
1. to receive the goſpel, he repaſſed the lake.

2. On his arrival at Capernaum, a paralytic was brought to him lying on a couch. Jeſus obſerving, that his faith was ſufficient to make him a convert to chriſtianity, told him, that his ſins were forgiven.
3. This was matter of great offence to ſome of the Jewiſh doctors, who
4. ſtood by; tho they did not care to expreſs it openly. Jeſus knowing their thoughts, rebuked their infidelity, after they had ſeen ſo many
5. miracles; and aſked them, If they thought it required more power
6. 7. to forgive ſin, than inſtantaneouſly to heal a bodily diſorder? He then healed the man with a word; and bad them judge from that inſtance,
8. whether he had not authority alſo to forgive ſin.—But whatever the Jewiſh doctors might think of Jeſus, the people every where conſidered him as a prophet ſent from God.

9. About this time Jeſus called Matthew, who was a tax-gatherer
10. under the Roman government, to be his diſciple; and afterwards refreſhing himſelf at his houſe, many people of ordinary character, with whom Matthew had before commonly converſed, ſat down to table
11. with him. This ſeeming familiarity did not eſcape the Phariſees, who expreſſed their ſurprize to the diſciples of Jeſus, that their maſ-
12. ter ſhould demean himſelf by keeping ſuch company. Jeſus informed of their cavil, aſked them, Whether the ſick, or the healthy had
13. more occaſion for a phyſician? And bad them diſtinguiſh, as their

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2. This was agreeable to the whole tenor of the goſpel, which offered forgiveneſs of all paſt ſins to every convert, on his firſt ſincerely embracing Chriſtianity.

6. *Take up thy bed.* This he might very eaſily do, as the beds of thoſe countries conſiſted of little more, than a thin mattreſs beneath, and a coverlet above.

9. The text ſays, *he aroſe and followed him.* But there is no reaſon to ſuppoſe he did not make up his accounts, and ſettle his buſineſs.

10. It is probable, Matthew might invite them, in order to give them an opportunity of converſing with Jeſus.

own

own ſcriptures taught them, between works of charity; and mere outward obſervances, which were the works they chiefly valued. My principal errand, added he, in this world is to convert ſinners.

At another time, the diſciples of John coming to Jeſus in ſome- 14.
thing of the ſame ſpirit, as if he were not ſufficiently ſtrict in outward obſervances, aſked, Whence it was, that they, and the diſciples of the Phariſees, were enjoined great auſterities; while among his diſciples, they obſerved nothing of that kind practiſed? Jeſus informed them 15, 16, 17.
by an alluſion to the ceremonies of a marriage, that his diſciples were yet only in a ſtate of probation—that their time of ſuffering, and auſterity ſhould ſoon arrive—but that the ſtrict doctrines he taught, could not be yet properly ingrafted on the old habits, and prejudices, which they ſtill retained.

While Jeſus was thus diſcourſing with the diſciples of John, a 18.
ruler of the ſynagogue came into the room, and kneeling down before him, ſaid, he was convinced from his miracles, of the greatneſs of his power; and was come to implore his aſſiſtance: My daughter, added he, is now dead; but I am perſuaded, that you can raiſe her again to life. On this Jeſus, and his diſciples, leaving the company, 19.
went with him.

On their way, a woman who had been twelve years afflicted with a 20.
flux of blood, and wiſhed for a ſecret cure, taking the advantage of a croud about Jeſus, privately touched his garment; perſuaded, from 21.
what ſhe had ſeen of his power, that ſhe needed nothing farther to 22.

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13. Hoſ. vi. 6.

17. *New wine into old bottles.* The ancients uſed to preſerve their wine in ſkins, and leathern bags; which were not very laſting; and when old, very improper for wine, in a ſtate of fermentation.

18. In every village, where there was a ſynagogue, ten men were conſtantly obliged to attend public worſhip; of whom three were called rulers.

20. She wiſhed for a ſecret cure, as her diſorder was a legal uncleanneſs. See Levit. xv. 19.

heal

heal her diſorder. Jeſus, not willing that ſuch an inſtance of faith ſhould paſs unobſerved, turning round, told her, that her cure was the reward of her faith.

23. Jeſus by this time approaching the ruler's houſe, found the people in great affliction; and ſinging lamentations over the deceaſed, accord-
24. ing to the cuſtom of the country. On this gently repreſſing their ſorrow, he told them, they ſhould ſee only the common effects of
25. ſleep. At firſt they were inclined to deride him; but they ſoon ſaw the young woman delivered in perfect health into the hands of her
26. parents; and joined the whole country in their aſtoniſhment at ſo great a miracle.

27. As he left the ruler's houſe, two blind men, probably waiting for
28. 29. him, intreated his compaſſion. Jeſus, at all times inculcating the neceſſity of faith; aſked them, Whether they firmly believed, he was able to do what they deſired? And putting their cure on this
30. 31. iſſue, he reſtored them both to ſight.—His injunction however to keep the matter ſecret, was but ill-obſerved by their overflowing gratitude.

32. 33. 34. About the ſame time he healed a dumb man poſſeſſed with an evil ſpirit. The ſimplicity of the common people immediately acknowledged the power of God: but the pride of the Phariſees, attributed the miracle to a confederacy with devils.

35. Thus Jeſus travelled through the country, preaching the goſpel, and confirming the truth of it by miracles.

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23. On a report, ſays Joſephus, that I was dead, my friends hired minſtrels (αυλητας) to lead the lamentations.

24. Our Saviour, in this paſſage, ſeems to allude to the triumph of Chriſtianity over the grave, by calling *death*, *ſleep*. He ſpoke the ſame language in the caſe of Lazarus. His diſciples, after him, adopted the idea, of which we have many inſtances; *they who ſleep in Jeſus—many among you ſleep—the firſt-fruits of them that ſlept*, &c. The ancient Chriſtians, ſtill improving on this idea, uſed to call a church-yard, κοιμητηριον, a *ſleeping-place*. Hence the word, *Cemetery*.

Great

Great was the diſpoſition of the common people to hear him. 36.
Wherever he went, they gathered round him in multitudes. Jeſus obſerving this, and knowing what blind guides they had to follow, bad his diſciples pray to God to enable them, and all other miniſters 37. 38.
of the goſpel, to diſcharge their duty faithfully in inſtructing the people.

CHAP. X.

Soon after this, calling his twelve apoſtles together (whoſe names 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
were Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the leſs, Thaddeus or Jude, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iſcariot) he gave them power to work miracles; and ſending them out to preach, thus inſtructed them.

Go not, ſaid he, among the Gentiles, and Samaritans; but confine your miniſtry at preſent to the Jews. Explain the nature of 7.
the goſpel to them; and confirm your doctrine by miracles. Ex- 8.
erciſe liberally the divine power I have given you. Freely communicate, what you have ſo freely received. And be not ſolicitous 9. 10.
about making proviſion for your journey. Travel in your ordinary manner; and truſt in providence for your ſupport. The workman
is worthy of his hire. Find out, in every town, the beſt diſpoſed 11. 12.

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3. Very good reaſons are given for ſuppoſing Bartholomew to be Nathaniel (ſee Stanhope's Ep. and Goſp. Vol. IV) Thomas ſignifies a twin: ſo does Didymus. Jude is called Lebbeus, probably from Lebba, a town in Paleſtine.

4. Suppoſed rather the *Canite* from Cana in Galilee.—Others ſuppoſe from a Hebrew word, which ſignifies *zealous*.

8. The ancient Chriſtians, in their apologies, &c. lay great ſtreſs on Chriſt's *commiſſioning others* to perform the works, which he performed himſelf. This, they ſay, ſhewed a divine power, which no prophet ever ſhewed or magician pretended to ſhew. Among the miracles here ſpecified, *raiſing the dead*, is one. But this is omitted by the other Evangeliſts; and by St. Matthew alſo in ſome very ancient MSS.

10. Neither a coat, nor a ſtaff is forbidden; only more than one of each—that is, the diſciples are forbidden to take anything ſuperfluous. Thus this paſſage accords with Mark vi. 8.

13. people, and with them remain. Bless the house you enter, and if your blessing find no acceptance there, it will at least return upon
14. yourselves. Such places as receive you not, must be left to the
15. judgment of God. They have had an offer of salvation, which Sodom, and Gomorrha never had; and must therefore expect a severer question.

16. But be assured, the opposition you shall meet, will be very great. Your harmless lives are ill-opposed to the wickedness of the world.
17. 18. 19. Use prudent caution therefore. But notwithstanding all, you shall
20. often be obliged to bear testimony to the truth at the hazard of your lives. You shall often be punished; and often brought before the rulers of the earth: but, in these cases, meditate not what answer
21. 22. you shall make. The spirit of God shall direct you. Only settle it in your minds, that this opposition shall be very great: for the prejudices of mankind will be superior to all the affections of nature. Brother shall league against brother, and father against child. Be not however discouraged; but consider the great end of all your labours; which perseverance shall certainly obtain.

23. Yet notwithstanding I encourage you to bear persecution with fortitude, I mean not that you should invite it. From one city, retreat to another; and yet the gospel shall hardly be preached through all the cities of Israel, before the destruction of the Jewish nation shall take place.

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13. Let *your peace*. The *imperative* here is put for the *future*. And in many other passages imperatives may be considered as prophetic expressions.

14. The passage in the original *shake off the dust of your feet*, is well illustrated by a Jewish custom. The Jews were so attached to their own land, which they thought the only seat of holiness; that when they returned into it from any heathen country, they used to shake the dust from their feet, that they might not pollute the holy soil. The expression therefore in the original, which alludes to this custom, carries with it, I should suppose, no idea of a curse; but only signifies, that they, who rejected the gospel, were to be considered among the heathen.

17. The text says, they will *scourge you in the synagogues*. The Jewish synagogue was not only a place of worship, but a court of justice; where, as in our courts of justice, smaller punishments were sometimes inflicted; see Luke xii. 11. Acts xxii. 19.

You

You muſt not expect better treatment than I have experienced 24. 25.
before you. I ſhall bear the reproaches of the world firſt; and it
muſt be your comfort to follow my example. Be not therefore diſ- 26. 27.
couraged from preaching publicly the doctrines I have committed 28.
to your charge. A time will come, when the uprightneſs of your
hearts will be made manifeſt. And fear not thoſe, whoſe utmoſt
malice can touch only the body; but fear him, whoſe power reaches
the ſoul——whoſe providence extends to the ſmalleſt parts of his 29. 30. 31.
creation; and will certainly therefore make his choſen ſervants the
objects of his care.

Conſider therefore the perſecutions you undergo, as a teſt of your 32. 33.
religion. Thoſe only are my faithful diſciples, who amidſt the
reproaches, and ill uſage of the world, dare confeſs me, and main-
tain their profeſſion. I repeat it to you, that the oppoſition between 34. 35. 36.
the goſpel, and the world ſhall be very great; and you muſt expect
to ſee enmity even among the members of the ſame family. This
too will be a teſt of mens fidelity to me. He who loves his earthly
connections, more than he does me, is no more a diſciple of the 37. 38.
goſpel; than he, who ſhrinks from perſecution. That man alone, 39.
in reality ſaves his life, who ſaves it to eternity. With theſe in-
ſtructions I ſend you to preach the goſpel; and ſhall conſider thoſe, 40. 41. 42.
who receive you, as receiving me; and as giving ſuch an evidence

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27. *That preach ye on the houſe-tops*, ſays the text. The windows of an eaſtern houſe being ſecured, and ſhut up by trellis work; the inhabitants, when they wiſhed to ſee anything in the ſtreet, or to ſay anything to the people below, uſed to go to the top of the houſe, which was commonly a terrace with a low parapet.

29. *Are not two ſparrows*, ſays our Saviour, *ſold for a farthing?* alluding probably to the ſparrows, and other ſmall birds, which were ſold in the temple-courts, for the purpoſe of ſacrifice. See Levit. xiv. 49. The farthing was the Roman *as*, or the tenth part of the *denarius*, about three farthings of our money. One farthing might buy two ſparrows, and two farthings five. See Luke xii. 6.

42. The doctrine of this verſe plainly is, that all our good works ſhould be done, for the ſake of God, and Chriſt. This is doing every thing *for the glory of God*.

of their regard for the gospel itself, as cannot fail to procure them its rewards.

CHAP. XI. 1. Jesus thus dismissing his disciples, went himself to preach among the towns in the neighbourhood.

2. About this time John the Baptist, who was still in prison, having probably long observed a jealousy subsisting among his followers against Jesus, and being desirous of removing it now at the close of his life; and of giving them those exalted notions of the Messiah, 3. which he himself had, sent two of them to Jesus to enquire, whether he were the real Messiah; or whether some other was to be still expected?

4. 5. Jesus, instead of answering John's disciples directly, performed many miracles before their eyes; and bad them tell John what they 6. had seen: adding by way of gentle rebuke to the inquirers, that they who took offence, in the midst of such manifest means of conviction, lost sight of their real interest.

7. 8. After they were gone, Jesus thus spoke to the people about John. It was not, said he, a trifling master, or the expectation of seeing any wordly pomp, or parade, that carried such numbers of you into 9. 10. the desolate regions of the wilderness. You expected to see a prophet; and indeed you saw one of the greatest, that ever appeared 11. —one who was himself the subject of prophecy—the predicted fore-

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2. See Matt. ix. 14. and Luke vii. 18.

5. The miracles performed were nearly those mentioned in Isaiah (xxxv. 5. 6.) so that our Saviour's answer was an appeal to *prophecy*, as well as *miracles*.

6. Some explain this passage, as if John, who had now finished his ministry, sent his two disciples to Jesus by way of obtaining a sort of authoritative, or official proof, if I may so call it, of his being the Messiah.—I should think this a good interpretation, if the sixth verse did not rather seem to point at the incredulity of the disciples. Others, tho I think without much ground, imagine from the sixth and eleventh verses, that John, who might suppose Jesus would have delivered him from Herod, and was worn out by a long imprisonment, had himself begun to doubt.

runner

runner of the Meſſiah. His office, as preparing the way for the goſpel, gave him a ſuperiority to all the prophets of the law; and yet it is inferior to the office of thoſe teachers, who are immediately engaged in propagating the goſpel itſelf. From the days of John, 12. 13.
the law and the prophets may be ſaid to have ceaſed. The terms of ſalvation are now offered, not only to the Jews; but to all nations; and they, who were eſteemed the moſt unworthy, ſhall be found to accept them with the greateſt eagerneſs. John is that holy 14.
perſon, who, in the power and ſpirit of Elias, was predicted to precede the Meſſiah.——This great truth Jeſus particularly recom- 15.
mended to their ſerious attention.

In the mean time (added Jeſus) the Jewiſh nation is ſtrangely 16. 17.
perverſe. Every method of calling them to repentance, is rendered effectual by their obſtinacy. John's auſterity hath been called madneſs: 18.
and my behaviour, which is more open, and unreſerved, hath been 19.
treated as diſorderly. But wiſdom, in the end, will vindicate itſelf.

Here Jeſus took an opportunity to exemplify what he had ſaid, 20.
by mentioning ſome of thoſe cities, in which he had chiefly performed 21. 22. 23.
his miracles. If thoſe works, ſaid he, which I wrought in Chorazin 24.
and Bethſaida, had been performed in Tyre, and Sidon, they would, long ago, have repented——Or, if Sodom had ſeen the miracles, which Capernaum ſaw, it might have exiſted to this day.——At the laſt judgment therefore theſe cities of Iſrael ſhall experience a much ſeverer treatment, than thoſe of the heathen.

Then Jeſus breaking out into a prayer, thanked God that the 25. 26.
goſpel, tho undiſcoverable by worldly wiſdom, and inacceſſible to wordly tempers, was open to all thoſe humble, ſincere, and gentle

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14. Malachi iv. 5, is the prophecy here alluded to, on which the Jews laid great ſtreſs; and it was one of the Jewiſh reaſons for not believing in Jeſus, that Elias had not appeared.

ſpirits,

27. ſpirits, who wiſhed to receive it. Your heavenly father, (ſaid he, turning to the people) who formed this great ſcheme for the ſalvation of men, hath intruſted the execution of it to me. No man
28. 29. 30. therefore can underſtand this divine revelation; but through me. Come then to me all ye, who labour under the burthen of ſin, or of unavailing rites; and I will give you reſt. That lowlineſs of heart, which I teach, will eaſe you of many diſtreſſes. Take therefore my yoke upon you; you will find it eaſy; and my burden, light.

CHAP. XII.

1. Soon after this a remarkable inſtance happened of that malice, which Jeſus had juſt been deſcribing.

He was walking through a corn-field, with his diſciples; who
2. being hungry, rubbed out, and eat, ſome of the ears of corn. This the Phariſees obſerving, were greatly offended——not becauſe the diſciples had taken what belonged to another, for they had done only what the law allowed—but becauſe they had broken the ſabbath; on which day the thing happened.

3. 4. 5. Jeſus told them they were ſtricter than even the law itſelf; and reminded them of the caſe of David, and the ſhew-bread; and likewiſe of the neceſſary miniſtration of the prieſts in the temple on the
6, 7, 8. ſabbath. Beſides, he told them, that his diſciples at leaſt were blameleſs, as acting under his authority, which might diſpence with the ſabbath; adding, that they would have been leſs forward

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27. The original words, *no man knoweth the Son, but the Father*, certainly ſhew great myſterioufneſs in the nature, and office of Chriſt; and ſhould check much of the impertinence of human explication.

2. Deut. xxiii. 25. 3. 1 Sam. xxi. 6. 5. Numb. xxviii. 9.

7. Our Saviour by *placing the obſervance of the ſabbath, among the works of the law*, is thought by ſome learned men, to conſider the ſabbath as a Moſaic inſtitution. But it is more generally conceived, from its being ſanctified at the creation; and ſtrongly alluded to in the patriarchal hiſtory, that it was earlier than the law.—The determination however is of little conſequence to Chriſtians; for all agree, that the ſabbath lays a divine obligation on them.

in

in their reproof, if they had underſtood the meaning of the expreſſion, *I will have mercy, and not ſacrifice*; that is, God every where lays the ſtreſs, rather on acts of piety, and charity, than on forms, and ceremonies.

Not long after, on a ſimilar occaſion, the Phariſees ſhewed an in- 9. 10. 11.
ſtance of the ſame malicious temper. Jeſus was teaching on the ſabbath in a ſynagogue, where was a man with a withered hand. The Phariſees obſerving he was about to heal him, aſked, with a malicious intention, whether it were lawful to do a work of that kind on the ſabbath? Is there one among you, replied Jeſus, ſo ſtrict, as not to relieve his beaſt from a pit on the ſabbath? And is 12.
it not equally allowable, to relieve a man in his diſtreſs? Then 13.
turning to the cripple, he bad him ſtretch out his hand; which was inſtantly reſtored.

The Phariſees vexed, and diſappointed; and not daring to attack 14.
him openly becauſe of the people, endeavoured in private to contrive his deſtruction.

Jeſus, in the mean time, knowing their malice, retired to another 15.
place; and great multitudes following him, he healed their ſick; 16.
but ordered them not to make him known; thus fulfilling the pro- 17.
phecy of Iſaiah, which pointed out the *quietneſs*, as well as *mercy*, which accompanied all his actions. *Behold my ſervant, whom I have* 18.
choſen; my beloved, in whom my ſoul is well pleaſed; I will pour my

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16. One thing in our bleſſed Saviour's conduct ſeems very evident, tho not enough perhaps taken notice of; that in many of his actions, he ſeems to have intended merely to ſet an *example to others*; when obviouſly thoſe actions appear to *terminate in himſelf*. Thus when he ordered thoſe, on whom he wrought miracles, to conceal the matter; he probably meant only a leſſon of humility. And in the preſent caſe, when he retired from the Phariſees, and wiſhed to conceal himſelf from them, he meant it only perhaps as a leſſon of prudence. He might have availed himſelf of his divine power, and at any time have eluded them by a miracle: but this would have been no leſſon to his followers. See a note on Matt. viii. 4.

17. Iſaiah xlii. 1.

ſpirit

ſpirit upon him, and he ſhall open the knowledge of truth to the gen-
19. *tiles. Quietneſs and peace ſhall mark his paths: he ſhall raiſe the fallen,*
20. *and afflicted, till truth at length ſhall univerſally triumph; and all the*
21. *gentiles ſhall truſt in his name.*

22. Some time after, Jeſus again drew on himſelf the malice of the Phariſees, on the following occaſion. He had healed a blind, and
23. dumb man, who had alſo been poſſeſſed with an evil ſpirit. This miracle had been much celebrated; and the people ſcrupled not,
24. every where, to declare him to be the Meſſiah. The Phariſees hearing of it, came from Jeruſalem to quiet theſe rumours by inſtilling into the people, that Jeſus caſt out devils by means of a con-
25. 26. 27. federacy with them. Jeſus aſked them, How they thought it poſſible for the devil to league againſt himſelf? Beſides, ſaid he, if I caſt out devils through a combination with devils, through whom do your

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20. Flax was uſed by the Jews in lamps. *Smoaking flax* therefore is equivalent to an *expiring lamp*; and conveys the ſame idea as a *bruiſed reed.*—*Till he ſend forth judgment unto victory.* i. e. till he eſtabliſh his religion.

24. See Mark iii. 22.

27. This is a difficult paſſage. It ſeems to appear not only from Joſephus, and other Jewiſh writers, but alſo from the ſcriptures themſelves, that the Jews uſed ſometimes to caſt out devils by exorciſm. If they did it by the power of God, their miracles ſeem to depreciate thoſe of our Saviour.——But I ſuppoſe the caſe to be this. Theſe exorciſms were ſimilar to the ancient oracles; and were a ſort of juggle, or confederacy, between men, and evil ſpirits, which before Chriſtianity, we have much reaſon to believe was the caſe. At the ſame time, as the Delphic prieſt pretended to divine authority; ſo alſo did the Jewiſh exorciſt. Our Saviour therefore well knowing that the Phariſees would never allow the exorciſt to derive his power from evil ſpirits; deſires only that the ſame ſuppoſition may be made for him.——It is probable alſo, that our Saviour's diſpoſſeſſion of an evil ſpirit, and an exorciſt's, might differ in this, that, in the former caſe, the evil ſpirits could never return; ſee Mark ix. 25. In the latter the cure might be temporary.

Others again are of opinion, that the Jewiſh exorciſm was merely a *juggling attempt*. We find, in fact, that at leaſt it ſometimes failed, as in the caſe of Sceva's ſons. (Acts xix. 13.) And it ſeems probable, that if the exorciſts could have acted by their own power, they would have made no attempts in the name of Chriſt; as we find they did.——There remains a difficulty however on every ſuppoſition.

friends

friends caſt them out? If you do not ſuppoſe them to make ſuch a confederacy; ſurely you carry your malice againſt me to a very unreaſonable length by ſuppoſing me to do ſo. If then you are 28.
forced to allow, that I caſt out devils by the power of God; you muſt alſo allow, that the religion I preach, comes from God. I 29.
have plainly ſhewn you, that I am ſtronger than the devil, by diſpoſſeſſing him. As our aims therefore are wholly different, you 30.
may judge what mine is, by it's oppoſition to his. Since therefore 31. 32.
the divine authority, by which I act, is ſo fully apparent, he who through malice aſcribes theſe works to the devil, can have no ſtronger means of conviction. He cannot be more hardened; and therefore this is the moſt difficult of all ſins to be waſhed away by repentance, and pardon. Make then the tree good, if you expect to have the 33. 34.
fruit ſo. Rectify your hearts. The tree, and it's fruits do not more agree, than a man's heart, and his converſation. The good heart 35.
as naturally throws out virtuous ſentiments, as the bad one does uncleanneſs, and blaſphemy. And be well aſſured, that your 36, 37.
wicked words ſhall be called into queſtion, at the laſt judgment, with the ſame ſtrictneſs, as your wicked actions.

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29. This verſe, I think, may be uſed as an argument againſt thoſe, who do not allow theſe to be real poſſeſſions.

30. The more obvious meaning of this verſe, is, that *in Chriſt's kingdom there is no medium: we muſt either be the ſubjects or the enemies of it.* But this ſenſe does not ſo eaſily connect with the context.

31. Nobody can ſuppoſe, conſidering the whole tenor of Chriſtianity, that there can be *any ſin*, which on repentance may not be forgiven. This therefore ſeems only a ſtrong way of expreſſing the difficulty of ſuch repentance; and the impoſſibility of forgiveneſs without it. Such an expreſſion occurs Mat. xix. 24. *It is eaſier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven*; that is, it is very difficult. That the Phariſees were not beyond the reach of forgiveneſs on their repentance, ſeems to be plain from ver. xli, where the repentance of the men of Nineveh is held out to them for an example.

36. The word αργον (unworking) ſignifies, *wicked*, according to the Jewiſh idiom.

38. While Jeſus was thus ſpeaking, ſome of the Phariſees deſired he would ſhew them a ſign from heaven, as a proof of his divine authority.

39. You have had ſigns enough already, ſaid Jeſus, to convince you.
40. No farther ſign ſhall be given you, except that of the prophet Jonas. As Jonas was reſtored to light, after he had been three days in the whale's belly; ſo ſhall the ſon of man be raiſed, after remaining
41. three days in the earth. But as Jonas is a *type*, let the men of Nineveh be an *example* to you. They repented at the preaching of Jonas, who performed no miracle among them: but you turn a deaf ear to one, who teaches you under the manifeſt authority of
42. God. The queen of Sheba took a long journey to hear the wiſdom of Solomon; while you reject the voice of heavenly wiſdom itſelf,
43. 44. 45. which even cries in your ſtreets.—When an evil ſpirit, having been caſt out of a man, returns to him again, accompanied with other evil ſpirits; the laſt ſtate of that man becomes worſe than the firſt. Such is the caſe of this wicked generation.

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38. The expectation of the ſign, which the Jews required, ſeems to have been founded principally on Dan. vii. 13. in which the ſon of man is mentioned, as coming on the clouds of heaven; and reducing all nations under his dominion.

40. Here Jeſus predicts his reſurrection, which was the laſt, and greateſt ſign he meant to give; on which his apoſtles always in their preaching, laid the greateſt ſtreſs. To the Phariſees, it would not only be a great ſign in itſelf; but would ſtill be a greater ſign, from its having been predicted. The wonderful circumſtance too of Jonah's caſe, would, from its being thus a type of a great event, which ſhould afterwards take place, appear in a new light. If an event ſo wonderful as the reſurrection of Chriſt, was predicted by any type, or ſign, it could only be predicted by one, which was itſelf alſo of a wonderful nature.

42. Queen of *Sheba*, or *Saba*, in Arabia Felix, which lies ſouth of Judea. This country being bounded by the ſea, is called the *uttermoſt part of the earth*.

43. *He walketh through dry places*, ſays the text: it ſhould be, *it walketh through dry places* (deſert places) that is, the evil ſpirit walketh, not the man.——The beſt interpretation, I think, of this paſſage, is, that the Jews, who were once the favourite people of God, and had had the evil ſpirits, as it were, driven out of them by the law of Moſes; had now become more impenitent, and more hardened, than the Gentiles themſelves.

As

As Jesus was thus discoursing with the Pharisees, his mother, and 46, 47.
others of his relations desired to speak with him. Jesus taking this opportunity, as he did all others, of giving his hearers an instructive lesson, said, These indeed are my natural relations; but I consider those chiefly as my relations, who do the will of God, and have a spiritual, rather than an earthly connection with me.

CHAP. XIII.

Soon after, as Jesus was teaching the people by the side of the lake, 1, 2.
and found the croud gathering round him, he got into a boat, and pushing a little from the shore, placed himself so as to be commodiously 3.
heard; and thus delivered instructions to them under similitudes.

A husbandman, said he, sowing his grounds, dropped some of the 4.
seeds on the beaten path; where they found no soil; but lay exposed, and were soon picked up by birds. Other seeds fell on rocky 5, 6.
ground, just covered with a slight surface of earth: they rooted themselves indeed; but having no depth, when the sun grew hot, they withered. Others again fell among weeds, which soon choked, 7.
and destroyed them. But such as fell on good ground, properly 8.
prepared to receive them, flourished and produced fruit in great abundance. Having delivered this parable to the people, he recom- 9.
mended to each of them the particular application of it.

Here his disciples inquired, why he did not address himself more 10.
plainly to the people; and intimated, that the parable was not sufficiently plain even to them.

To you, answered Jesus, I can explain the mysteries of the gospel 11.
with great openness; to them I cannot. Your sincerity enables you 12.
to receive more and more instruction: while their blindness, and

2. If the shore were elevated, as it probably might be, and formed a kind of semicircular bay, the people might range themselves round it, as in an amphitheatre, and hear with great advantage.

ignorance, and hardneſs of heart ſhut them out from that knowledge,
13. which they might otherwiſe receive. I apply to them therefore in parables, that they may be, as it were, their own inſtructors——that they may ſee, without perceiving that they ſee—and hear,
14, 15. without knowing that they hear. For as the prophet Iſaiah ſays of them, They have hardened their hearts; they have ſhut their ears, and cloſed their eyes; ſo as to prevent, as much as they can,
16, 17. my drawing them to repentance. But your diſpoſitions are of a different kind: therefore you are bleſſed with a revelation of thoſe things, which patriarchs, and prophets have deſired in vain to ſee, and hear.

18, 19. With regard to the parable of the ſower, continued Jeſus, the beaten path repreſents thoſe, whoſe hard impenitent hearts would not
20, 21. ſuffer the word to enter. The ſhallow ſoil ſpread over a rock, holds out ſuch, as, on hearing the truth, receive it eagerly, and ſeem in earneſt; but perſecution ariſing, like a ſcorching ſun, they fall
22. away. Again, the weedy ground repreſents thoſe, who endeavour to accommodate their religion to the world: but the pleaſures, and
23. cares of life generally prevail, and choke the better part. Laſtly,

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13. Another ſenſe of this paſſage may be, *that if the goſpel had been preached plainly to them, they could not have underſtood it.* It follows therefore, that it was better to preach it in parables; which might afterwards be a convincing proof, both to them and others, when they came to underſtand them more clearly.

15. This quotation, which our Saviour makes from Iſaiah, appears at ſight, as if God hardened the hearts of men, on purpoſe to prevent their converſion; but it is common for God to ſpeak by his prophets, of events, that would fall out, in a manner as if he had injoined them. See Bp. Lowth's note on Iſ. vi. 9.

23. The *wicked lives of Chriſtians* are ſometimes urged as an argument againſt Chriſtianity; but ſo unjuſtly, that, in fact, the wicked lives of Chriſtians are an argument of *its truth.* Here is a parable, deſcribing the future times of the goſpel (which may therefore be conſidered as prophetic,) from which it ſeems to appear, that three parts, out of four, of mankind will reject its ſalutary influence.

the

the good ſoil is an emblem of thoſe, in whom the goſpel takes firm rooting; and having no obſtruction, gives a copious produce.

Jeſus ſtill continuing his diſcourſe to the people, illuſtrated the 24.
future ſtate of the goſpel under the following ſimilitude.

A huſbandman, ſaid he, ſowed good ſeed in his field: among 25.
which his enemy ſcattered tares in the night. The miſchief at 26.
firſt was unperceived; but the corn no ſooner grew up, than the
tares appeared alſo. The ſervants of the huſbandman wiſhed them 27, 28.
to be weeded out. But he forbad it; ſaying, Let them alone at 29, 30.
preſent. Let all be reaped together at harveſt; and I will then
order the reapers to bind the tares, and the corn in ſeparate bundles—
the one to be burned, the other to be laid up in my granery.

In another parable Jeſus thus illuſtrated the progreſs of the 31, 32.
Chriſtian religion. It is like a grain of muſtard-ſeed, which when
ſown, is among the leaſt of all ſeeds; but it's growth is more prodigious, than that of any other; in as much as it becomes a tree, and affords ſhelter even to the fowls of the air.

The ſame repreſentation, carried ſomewhat further, Jeſus gave 33.
under another ſimilitude. The goſpel, ſaid he, is like a ſmall portion of leaven; which being covered with a large quantity of meal, is not ſeen at firſt; but beginning to ferment, by degrees ſpreads over the whole maſs.

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24. St. Matthew repreſents the diſciples as breaking in upon our Saviour's diſcourſe to the people; which he probably does with a view of placing the parable, and the explanation of it together. But we find from St. Mark, that *Jeſus was alone*, when the diſciples aſked the explanation.

32. In eaſtern countries, this plant grows to an enormous ſize.

33. This parable may be conſidered, as a kind of prophecy, that the goſpel ſhould in time, overſpread the whole world; and tho parables of this texture (as we have ſeveral of a prophetic caſt) were obſcure at firſt; yet on their completion, they certainly tend greatly to confirm the goſpel.

Thus

34, 35. Thus Jesus instructed the people, as they were able to bear instruction: and thus fulfilled the prophecy of David, *I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter dark sayings of old.*

36. Then Jesus dismissing the multitude, retired into a house with his disciples, and at their desire, explained to them the parable of the tares.

37. By the sower, he told them, was meant Christ—the field was the
38. world—the corn represented good Christians—the tares, sinners—
39. the enemy was the devil—the harvest, the end of the world—and
40, 41. the reapers, the angels. As the tares therefore were gathered up,
42, 43. and burnt; so, at the conclusion of all things, the angels should separate the good from the bad: and while these should be condemned to a place of punishment, those should be conveyed to regions of happiness. And let mankind, said he, seriously attend to these great
44. truths! The more they attend to them, the more they shall find them the support of all their hopes. For the gospel, added he, is like treasure hid in a field. He that finds it, transported with joy,
45, 46. sells all he has to purchase so valuable a possession. It is like a gem
47, 48. of infinite price, which the merchant runs every risk to possess.
49, 50. And well may it be considered of infinite price: for on it depend all your hopes, and fears. It is that great net thrown into the sea, which incloses of every kind. When it is drawn on shore, a sepa-

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34. See Mark iv. 33.

35. Ps. lxxviii. 2.

44. In the under parts of our Saviour's parables, there is sometimes the *appearance* of an immoral tendency; as in the commendation bestowed on the *unjust steward.* Here it seems against the principles of equity for a man to conceal from the possessor, the unknown value of a field, which he had accidentally discovered; that he might purchase it himself at an under-price.——But we want common sense only as a commentator on such passages, as these. Common sense shews us at once, that the instruction is not meant to be conveyed in any of these *under-parts* and *trivial circumstances:* but in the *general scope* only of the whole parable.

ration

ration ſhall be made—the good ſhall be preſerved; and the refuſe deſtroyed.

Jeſus then aſked his diſciples, if they fully underſtood the meaning of all he had ſaid? On their anſwering, they had; he bad them lay up then in their memories what they had heard; and imitate the prudent houſe-holder, who from his ſtores produces to his gueſts, according to their ſeveral conditions, ſuch things, as are beſt accommodated to each. 51, 52.

After this, Jeſus leaving Capernaum, went to Nazareth; where, according to his uſual cuſtom, he preached in the ſynagogue. Here he was received in a manner, very different from what he might have expected. His countrymen, who had known him from his youth, blinded entirely by his earthly connections, would not acknowledge his divine original. Whence hath he obtained, ſaid they, this mighty wiſdom? we are well acquainted with all his relations; and all the opportunities he hath had: we can never therefore believe, that he can be the mighty perſon he pretends to be. 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58.

Jeſus told them, it was only in his own country, in which a prophet was received with diſhonour: and finding the infidelity of the people of Nazareth ſuch, as could not at preſent be wrought on, he left them after performing a few miracles among them.

CHAP. XIV.

By this time the fame of Jeſus, having ſpread through every part of Judea, had reached the ears of Herod; who, under the terrors of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

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55. *His brethren.* Αδελφοι has a more extenſive ſenſe. So among the Latins.

Frater erat, fraterna peto———

58. It is reaſonable to believe, that our Saviour never performed a miracle, but where he foreſaw, it might have a good effect in a religious light, either on the perſon, on whom it was performed; or on the ſpectators; thus making one act of mercy lead to another.

1. *Tetrarch* ſignifies a prince over a fourth part of a country. This Tetrarch was the ſon of Herod the great; who was ſucceeded by his three ſons, Archilaus in Judæa; and Herod, and Philip in the other parts of his dominions. Thus Tacitus, *liberi Herodis tripartitò rexere.*

of a guilty conſcience, declared Jeſus could be no other, than John the Baptiſt, whom he had beheaded, and who had ariſen from the dead.

This wicked prince had long lived in a ſtate of inceſt with Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for which John; with a proper freedom, had rebuked him. Herod unable to bear, what appeared to him, ſo great an inſult, impriſoned John; and would have put him to death, had he not ſtood in awe of the people, who looked
6. 7. 8. upon John as a prophet. It happened however at a ſolemn feaſt, held on Herod's birth-day, that the daughter of Herodias danced before the king, and his company, in a manner ſo engaging to Herod, that he promiſed with an oath, to beſtow on her whatever ſhe ſhould aſk. So inviting an opportunity demanded conſideration. She adviſed with her mother; who ordered her to aſk the head of
9, 10, 11. John the Baptiſt. The king after expreſſing ſome concern for the neceſſity his oath had laid upon him, complied at length with the requeſt. The head was brought, and preſented to Herodias, who
12. carried it to her mother. After the execution, the diſciples of John were permitted to bury the corpſe; and when they had diſcharged this office, they came to Jeſus with the mournful account; looking on him now as their only maſter.

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rexere. Hiſt. lib. 5. cap. 9.—But ſtill there is great difficulty about that *Philip*, who was Herodias's firſt huſband; as Joſephus calls him *Herod.* Dr. Lardner, ſhews (in the firſt vol. of his Cred.) that Herod the Great having ſeveral other ſons, by different wives, who continued private perſons, it was probably to one of them, to whom Herodias was firſt married: and his name (as Lardner ſhews from other ſimilar inſtances) might be Philip Herod.

11. It is to this day a practice in the courts of eaſtern princes, to produce the head of a criminal, to evince his death.

12. It does not abſolutely appear from the text, that the *diſciples of John looked on Jeſus, as their only maſter.* It ſeems probable however from this, and other paſſages. And ſo far as the probability goes, it is a good comment on the beginning of the eleventh chapter; as it ſhews, that the deſign of John, on that occaſion, was anſwered.

Soon

Soon after this, Jesus imbarking on the lake, sailed along the shore; and landed in a solitary place with his disciples. But his motions could not be concealed; and great multitudes followed him by land; whom he graciously received; and healed the sick they brought with them. 13. 14.

As evening drew on, his disciples put him in mind of the solitary place, they were in; and of the difficulty the people might find in providing food, if they were not soon dismissed. Jesus inquired, what provision they had; and being informed they had five loaves, and two fishes, he ordered the people to sit down in ranks; and taking the bread, and the fish, and giving thanks, he brake them in pieces, and gave portions of them to his disciples, to distribute among the people; thus the whole multitude, consisting of five thousand men, besides women, and children, not only satisfied their hunger; but left behind fragments sufficient to fill twelve baskets. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21.

Jesus then ordered his disciples to imbark; and leave him to dismiss the people; which having done, he enjoyed a short interval of private devotion. 22. 23. 24.

Night was now come on, and the boat, in which the disciples had imbarked, was struggling with a boisterous, and adverse wind. Jesus, thinking this a proper opportunity to impress upon them by 25.

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13. It does not appear, that this intelligence, as the text seems to lead, was *the reason* of Jesus's retreating to a solitary place; as there is no intimation given of his apprehending any danger from Herod. Some connect the 13th verse with the 2d, and consider all the intervening verses, in a parenthesis.

13. Πεζη has this meaning, rather than *on foot* as our translation has it. A person might travel πεζη, and yet either on *horse-back*, or in a *carriage*.

Ει δ'ΘΙλεις πεζος, παρα τοι διφρος——

Odyss. γ. 325.

If you chuse to go *by land*, you may have a *chariot*.

25. Our Saviour's miracles, I think, may be classed into three kinds——such as attended the solemnity of his birth, and death; to which I add his resurrection, and ascension——such

as

by a miracle the great principle of faith, and of putting their truſt in God, which was ever among his firſt inſtructions, went to them, walking on the ſurface of the lake. The diſciples not knowing him
26. at firſt through the ſhades of night, ſuppoſed it was a ſpirit. But
27. Jeſus ſpeaking to them, compoſed their fears. On this Peter,
28. with more confidence than the reſt, called out to Jeſus for per-
29. 30. miſſion to come to him. Jeſus giving him leave, he made the attempt: but ſeeing the waves boiſterous, his heart failed; and
31. feeling himſelf begin to ſink, he cried out. Jeſus reaching his hand to him, intimated that his miſcarriage was owing ſolely to
32. 33. his want of faith. The wind ceaſed, as they entered the boat; and all who were in it, were ſo much ſtruck with the miracle, that they fell down on their knees before Jeſus, and acknowledged him to be the ſon of God.

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as conveyed benefits to mankind; of which the bulk of his miracles conſiſted—and ſuch as were mere appeals to the ſenſes of men, without ſuch *apparent* benefit.

Of the miracles of this laſt claſs, we have very few inſtances. Only three, I think, can be mentioned—the curſing of the fig-tree—the devils ſent into the ſwine—and this of Jeſus's walking on the ſea: unleſs to theſe we add the money taken out of the fiſh's mouth.

Wiſe reaſons, no doubt, there were for all theſe miracles; tho they are not ſo apparent to us.——With regard to the preſent miracle, it was a common eaſtern cuſtom to inſtruct by *ſigns*, or *actions*, as making the ſtrongeſt impreſſion. Thus Ahijah rent Jeroboam's mantle, to denote the revolt of the tribes. Thus alſo the rejection of Saul was ſignified by the rending of Samuel's garment; and thus Agabus binding himſelf with Paul's girdle, predicted the impriſonment of that apoſtle. Numerous inſtances of the ſame kind might be produced. This of Jeſus's walking on the ſea is one. His ſuffering Peter to leave the boat, was well calculated at leaſt as a teſt of his faith, and was a beautiful illuſtration of its effects. According to his faith, he found himſelf to *riſe*, or *ſink*.——It might alſo be conſidered as an inſtance of Jeſus's *power over nature*. *Two feet walking on water*, was an Egyptian hieroglyphic to denote *impoſſibility*; and Job reckons it among the characteriſtics of the Almighty, *to tread upon the waves of the ſea*; Job. ix. 8. If we conſider the miracle before us, in theſe lights, it receives additional dignity, and weight.

33. The expreſſion *they who were in the boat*, ſeems rather to imply the *boatmen*, than the *diſciples*; which latter word is generally uſed, when none elſe are meant.

Jeſus

Jesus, soon after, landed in Genesareth, where the inhabitants hearing of his arrival, quickly dispersed intelligence through the country; and multitudes of people flocking round him, begged only to touch the hem of his garment: and none came without finding the expected relief. 34, 35, 36.

CHAP. XV.

The fame of Jesus was now so great, that the doctors of the Jewish law thought it expedient, if possible, to put a stop to it. The best ground, which they imagined they could take, was in the matter of traditions. If they could convince the people, that he despised that strictness, which they themselves professed, they had no doubt, but they should diminish his popularity. With this view a body of them came to him from Jerusalem; and told him, they had observed, with much surprize, that his disciples were brought up in the neglect of all those traditions, which had been delivered to them by their forefathers—that for instance, it was an admirable security against every possible defilement, to wash their hands constantly before a meal; but his disciples, they took notice, observed no such purification. 1. 2.

Jesus asked them, how they could find fault with his disciples for neglecting those traditions, which in so many instances contradicted the laws of God? The commandment, said he, for instance, injoins 3.

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36. If these were the Gergasenes, as some suppose, who desired (Mat. viii. 34) that *he should depart from their coasts*, their faith seems, by this time, to have increased greatly.

1. Josephus tells us (Antiq. xviii. 10) that the Pharisees appointed many strict observances, which were not in the law; and had violent disputes with the Sadducees, on subjects of this kind. The men of fashion, and free thinkers, (the historian observes,) sided with the Sadducees: but των φαρισαιων το πληθος συμμαχον εκοντων, *the body of the people admired the Pharisees.*

2. Every thing *separated to a religious use*, among the Jews, was αγιον, *holy*. Every thing else was κοινον *common*, profane, unholy. Thus as food was sanctified by prayer and thanksgiving, it was among the αγια; and therefore was not to be touched with unpurified hands.——The rabbins boast of a great martyr to this religious opinion, the rabbi Akiba; who, being confined in prison, and having but a small quantity of water allowed, chose rather to die of thirst, than to omit washing his hands.

5. 6. you to reverence, and aſſiſt your parents. But your traditions ſpeak a different language. If, inſtead of aſſiſting your parents with any part of your ſubſtance, you dedicate it to the uſe of the temple, the 7, 8, 9. divine command is at once ſuperſeded.——You hypocrites, examine the prophet's deſcription; and ſee how far you may apply it to your-ſelves: This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth; and honoureth me with their lips; while their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worſhip me; *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*†.

10, 11. Then ſpeaking to the people, as they ſtood round him, he told them, they might be aſſured, it was not what entered into the mouth, which defiled a man; but what proceeded from the heart.

12. Soon after, when Jeſus was alone with his diſciples, they told him, they underſtood, that the Phariſees were grievouſly offended at what he had ſaid to them.

Jeſus bad them not be afraid of any conſequences, that ſhould ariſe 13. from their diſpleaſure. Such plants only, ſaid he, as my heavenly father hath planted, ſhall be ſuffered to increaſe. Fear them not. 14. Their pernicious doctrine, and all that are led by it, ſhall come to nothing.

Peter then intimating, that he, and his fellow-diſciples did not clearly 15. underſtand what Jeſus had ſaid about defiling the man, deſired a farther 16. explanation of it. Jeſus expreſſing his ſurprize at the ſlowneſs of their 17. 18. 19. 20. underſtanding, bad them conſider, that what *entered into* the man, affected only the body, and could not poſſibly affect the mind; ſo that there could be no immorality in eating with unwaſhen hands.——But what *proceeded from* the heart, wicked thoughts, and wicked actions of every kind, were the only things, that could defile the man.

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9. Iſa. xxix. 13.

† The papiſts ſeem fond of applying ſome paſſages in favor of oral tradition, which we think have no reference to it; but this paragraph ſeems directly to apply.

Soon

Soon after, Jeſus went into the country bordering on Tyre, and 21.
Sidon, where a Canaanitiſh woman, a heathen, coming to him, and 22.
addreſſing him by the name of the ſon of David, beſought him to
heal her daughter, who was poſſeſſed by an evil-ſpirit. Jeſus at firſt 23.
taking no notice of her, his diſciples deſired him to diſmiſs her, as
ſhe clamoured after them. But he, intending, ſhe ſhould diſcover 24.
that faith, which he knew ſhe poſſeſſed, told her, his office, and
deſign led him only, at preſent, to aſſiſt the houſe of Iſrael. On
her ſtill perſiſting to extort favour from him, he added, that it was 25. 26.
not right to take what was thus deſigned for the children, and give
it to dogs. It was true, ſhe replied; but it could not injure the 27.
children, if the dogs picked up the offals from their table. An 28.
anſwer ſo clearly comprehending the power, and office of the Meſſiah,
drew from Jeſus the warmeſt approbation of her faith, together with
an aſſurance, that ſhe ſhould find her daughter perfectly recovered on
her return.

From the borders of Tyre and Sidon Jeſus went again to the lake 29.
of Geneſareth; and ſeeing the multitudes thronging round, with a 30. 31.
number of ſick, and infirm people, he retired to a riſing ground;
and healing their diſorders, he raiſed in the multitude a ſpirit of
praiſe, and adoration to God for his mercies to them.

Then calling his diſciples, he told them he had compaſſion on the 32.
multitude, as they had now been with him three days; and muſt
have conſumed their proviſion; ſo that if he ſhould ſend them
home faſting, he feared the conſequences.

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22. Why a heathen ſhould call Jeſus by the name of the ſon of David, does not ſo eaſily appear. She might have heard him ſo called. She was certainly, if not convinced, at leaſt, in the way of conviction.

26. *Dog* was a common term, by which the Jews uſed to denote *the heathen*. Our Saviour uſes it here, not in the way of reproach, but only to aſſiſt his argument.

The

33. The disciples remarked, as they had done before, the difficulty of supplying such a multitude with food in the wilderness: But Jesus
34, 35, 36, 37. finding they had seven loaves, and a few small fishes, ordered the people to sit down; and giving thanks, he distributed the bread, and fish among them, through the hands of his disciples; and the offals, after they were all satisfied, filled seven baskets; tho the mul-
38. titude consisted of more than four thousand people. He then dismissed them, and went himself into the country of Magdala.

CHAP. XVI.

1. In this place some of the Pharisees, and Sadducees, once more desired him to give them a sign from heaven, as a confirmation of his
2, 3. divine authority. You judge of fair weather, and foul, said Jesus, by the appearance of the sky: is it not just as easy for you, if you were so disposed, to look into the prophets, and see in them the signs
4. of the Messiah?—But with a people so hardened, no signs avail: nor shall I give you any sign, but, as I told you, on a like occasion, the sign of the prophet Jonas.

Jesus, having said this, left them abruptly; and taking boat with
5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. his disciples, passed over the lake. On their passage alluding to the conversation he had just had, he bad them beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and Sadducees. They however not well understanding him, and recollecting they had forgotten to take provision, thought he had alluded to that neglect. Jesus having first rebuked their inat-

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33. The thoughtless infidelity of the disciples, after they had seen their master so lately feed five thousand people with five loaves, and two fishes, would have been beyond all belief, if our Saviour himself had not, on all occasions, spoken of it in the most pointed terms; *O ye of little faith.—O faithless and perverse generation—If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed.* From these expressions we can conceive nothing, but such grossness as is here described. Indeed it was not till after our Saviour's death, and the descent of the Holy Ghost, that the disciples assumed those great and noble characters, which strike us with such admiration. They were yet but *mere men*; they became afterwards *inspired apostles.*——See the preface to the acts of the apostles.

4. See chap. xii. 39.

tention,

tention, and put them in mind of the two great miracles of multiplying provisions, which he had just wrought; explained his meaning to them; and shewed them how the corrupt doctrines of the Pharisees and Sadducees might well be compared to leaven.

Jesus then went into the parts about Cesarea Philippi, and in- 13.
tending now to give his disciples a clearer view of the Messiah's kingdom, he began by asking them, (as they had lately been travelling, and preaching through the country) what opinion men, in general, had conceived of him? The disciples said, the opinions of 14.
men were various; some thought him John the Baptist—others Elijah—while many thought him Jeremiah, or some other of the 15.
prophets. Jesus proceeded to ask them their own sentiments about him. Peter with great vehemence cried out, he firmly believed 16.
him to be the Messiah. Jesus commending this confession of his 17.
faith, told him, the perfect knowledge of this great truth depended entirely on the revelation of God's will. This truth, added Jesus, 18.

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13. There were two places of the name of Cesarea. The first was a sea-port of note on the Mediterranean; which had been rebuilt by Herod the great; and named in honour of Augustus Cæsar. This is the town so often mentioned in the Acts of the apostles. But the town here meant, was an inland-town built by Philip the Tetrarch, who named it Cesarea in honour of Tiberius Cæsar; and added his own name to it, by way of distinction.

13. Bowyer conjectures, that the passage, at the end of this verse, should be pointed thus. *Whom do men say that I am? The son of man?*

14. The Jews had a notion, that Jeremiah should at some time appear to recover the ark of the covenant, which he had hid. See 2 Macc. ii. 5.

18. Some interpreters consider *Peter himself* as the *rock*, on which Christ should found his church; because he was the first teacher among the Gentiles. And indeed the *words* naturally give this sense; which is agreeable also to other scriptural expressions, as that of Ephes. ii. 20. *Ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles.* At the same time, the *sense* is more consistent, when we consider *Peter's confession* as the rock; as if our Saviour had said, (alluding to the custom of building castles, and citadels on rocks) the great truth, that I am the Messiah, is the foundation of the Christian religion.—If the former sense be taken, it is however equally applicable to all the apostles: See Mat. xviii. 18, and John xx. 23.

alluding

alluding to Peter's name, is that great rock, on which I mean
19, 20. to eſtabliſh my church to the end of time. To you, my diſ-
ciples, I give the power of unlocking, as it were, and opening,
the myſteries of the goſpel; and inſpired, as you ſhall be, by the
Holy Ghoſt, whatever you ſhall declare to be my will on earth, ſhall
be confirmed in heaven. At the ſame time Jeſus ordered his diſciples
not to mention, at preſent to the people, the great truth of his being
the Meſſiah; deſiring rather that they ſhould themſelves collect it
from what they heard, and ſaw †.

21. Jeſus having now made a plain diſcovery of himſelf to his diſ-
ciples, proceeded a ſtep farther, and opened ſome of thoſe great
22. truths with regard to his ſufferings, and death. But Peter, who
had gained only a general notion of the Meſſiah's office, could not
bear theſe humiliating ideas, and expreſſed himſelf with his uſual
23. warmth againſt them. This drew upon him a ſevere rebuke from
Jeſus, as a perſon darkened with worldly prejudices, which oppoſed
the whole ſcheme of the goſpel.

24. Jeſus proceeded to tell them, that it was not the Meſſiah alone
who ſhould be ill-treated by a wicked world, but that all his fol-
25. lowers muſt expect the ſame treatment. The world indeed, ſaid he,
will become the great teſt of the ſincerity of men. The contention
will lie between the indulgences of their lives, and the ſalvation of
26. their ſouls. But they, who think juſtly on this intereſting ſubject,
will ſee the great difference between the two objects, and will think
the happineſs of the next world ſhould not be riſked for the ſake

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19. This ſeems to be the ſenſe of the words binding and looſing, which was a proverbial expreſſion among the Jews; and certainly relates to *things*; not to *perſons*, as the papiſts conſtrue it. *Things*, not *perſons*, are evidently alluded to in the parallel places of Matthew (xviii. 18.) ——*Giving the keys*, ſeems to be an alluſion to a cuſtom among the Jews of giving a key to their rabbies, when they were admitted to expound the ſcripture.

† See Mat. xi. 4. 5.

22. *Be it far from thee, Lord!* Ιλεως σοι. *Mercy on thee!*

23. The word *Satan* ſignifies here an *enemy*, or *oppoſer*.

of

of any enjoyments, or advantages, in this—always remembering the 27.
ſtrict account they muſt give at the great day, when the ſon of 28.
man ſhall judge the world. And tho the Meſſiah's kingdom, added he, which throws ſo ſtrong a light on the next world, may appear now at a diſtance; yet you may be aſſured, that it ſhall ſpeedily be eſtabliſhed, and in a great degree even in the life-time of ſome of you, who ſtand round me.

CHAP. XVII.

Jeſus having opened theſe things to his diſciples, and given them 1.
ſo humiliating a view of the ſufferings of the Meſſiah, thought it proper to exalt their hopes, by giving them alſo a foretaſte of his glory. With this intention he led Peter, James, and John, to the ſummit of a lofty mountain; where ſuddenly, as they were 2.
praying, his countenance aſſumed the brightneſs of the ſun, and a ſplendid, and glorious light inveſted him. On his right, and left, 3.
ſtood the two great prophets of the law, Moſes, and Elijah, in the ſame reſplendent form, and entered into converſation with him.

The diſciples were rather tranſported, than terrified, at this 4.
glorious viſion; and Peter cried out, Lord! what happineſs is this! let us endeavour to fix this raviſhing ſcene, and erect tabernacles for its reception.

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28. This is a difficult paſſage. As the Meſſiah's coming is introduced here, immediately after mentioning the laſt judgment, many of the early Chriſtians conceived theſe words to be a prediction of the ſpeedy end of the world. When the event began to diſparage that interpretation, it was next conceived, that theſe words held out the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. If they do, it is certainly rather abruptly introduced; and not ſo eaſy, I think, as the interpretation here given.

3. It is generally ſuppoſed, that this viſion was exhibited in the night, as St. Luke ſays the diſciples were *heavy with ſleep*; and likewiſe, that they came down from the mountain *the next day*. If this was the caſe, the night would add greatly to the grandeur, and reſplendency of the viſion.

5. While he was ſpeaking, an awful voice iſſuing from the cloud, proclaimed: This is my beloved ſon, in whom I am well pleaſed; hear ye him.

6. Overpowered by the grandeur of the whole tranſaction, the dif-
7. ciples fell to the ground; on which Jeſus reached out his hand to
8. raiſe them. When they looked up, the viſion was gone, and they ſaw Jeſus ſtanding with them alone, as before.

9. As they deſcended the mountain, Jeſus forbad them to mention what they had ſeen, till after his reſurrection; as this viſion was at preſent intended only for their uſe.

10. While they continued to deſcend, the diſciples, muſing on what they had ſeen, and heard, and thinking this the greateſt ſign, which Jeſus had yet ſhewn of his being the Meſſiah, had ſtill one ſcruple. The Jews univerſally believed, that Elijah ſhould precede the Meſſiah, in ſome glorious manner; and as he had now appeared in ſuch ſplendor, a publication of it, they thought might tend to
11. 12. convince them. Jeſus pointed out the miſtaken notion the Jews had of that prophecy, which mentioned the coming of Elijah, and

of

5. The laſt words of this voice, are ſuppoſed to allude to the predictions of Moſes. Deut. xviii. 15.

8. The faith of Peter is here repreſented exactly like the faith of meaner Chriſtians——ſubject to various paroxiſms. On Jeſus's aſking, what his opinion of him was? his faith appeared raiſed to the greateſt height. When Jeſus mentioned his death, and ſufferings; it ſank. But on the ſight of this glorious viſion, it roſe again. Thus the apoſtles themſelves, and meaner Chriſtians of courſe, have occaſion frequently to cry, *Lord, increaſe our faith!* Happy is he, whoſe faith having ſurmounted all obſtacles, is at length invariably fixed.

9. Why Peter, James, and John were favoured on this, and other occaſions, we are not given to underſtand; nor have we any ground for conjecture. We need not however ſuppoſe, that the transfiguration of Jeſus, was intended to be concealed from the other apoſtles.——One thing is very obvious; it is certainly a great argument of the truth and ſimplicity of Matthew, to relate the preference of others to himſelf.

11. The expreſſion, *ſhall come, and reſtore all things*, (which is ſpoken in the future tenſe, after the death of John the Baptiſt,) has led ſome interpreters to conceive, that Elijah ſhould precede

of that ſplendid reſtoration of things, which they expected; and informed his diſciples, that Elijah had already appeared—that he had made that preparation for the Meſſiah; and had ſuffered that treatment, which the prophets had foretold—and that the treatment of the Meſſiah himſelf ſhould be exactly the ſame.—This character 13.
of the prophetic Elijah eaſily led the diſciples to conceive, that he meant John the Baptiſt.

When they returned to the foot of the mountain, they found a 14. 15. 16
great croud; from which a perſon advancing, deſired Jeſus to have compaſſion on him. My ſon, ſaid he, is grievouſly afflicted by an evil ſpirit, and I brought him to your diſciples, hoping they would have healed him, but they could not.

Jeſus rebuking their infidelity, immediately healed the young 17. 18. 19. 20. 21.
man.

Afterwards when he was alone with his diſciples, they inquired, why they could not perform the miracle?

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precede Chriſt's ſecond coming, as well as his firſt. The learned Mr. Mede was of this opinion: and Milton, who was Mede's fellow-collegian, probably took the idea from him.

———The great Tiſhbite, who on fiery wheels
Rode up to heaven, yet once again to come.
Par. Reg.

20. Dr. Clark paraphraſes the original thus; *If you had never ſo little faith in compariſon*; and indeed the Jews made uſe of the word *muſtard-ſeed* proverbially to expreſs a little thing; as they did the phraſe, *remove a mountain*, to expreſs a great one. Yet, I think theirs is a better interpretation, who ſuppoſe it alludes to the *increaſing nature* of a grain of muſtard-ſeed, after it is ſown. See Luke xvii. 5. in which the increaſing nature of the ſeed, when ſown, ſeems plainly alluded to; which, I think, is a ſanction for our uſing it in this ſenſe here.

21. This verſe affords an inſtance of the ingenuity of criticiſm. A learned writer (ſee enquiry into Demon. p. 47) inſtead of εν προσευχη, και νηστεια, by *prayer and faſting*; would read (tho unauthorized,) εν προσεχει νηστεια *by conſtant faſting*, which he deemed the beſt cure for what he ſuppoſed an epileptic diſorder. There might be ſome colour for this criticiſm, if the diſciples had been enquiring about a *natural cure* of the diſorder: but their queſtion was, *Why could not we caſt him out?*—Bowyer too, whoſe criticiſms, I think, are often very refined, makes the ſame correction, as the author of the Enquiry.

Jeſus told them, it was intirely owing to their want of faith. Faith, ſaid he, like a grain of muſtard-ſeed, ſown in the earth, muſt be of an increaſing nature. If your faith, ſaid he, were of this kind, no miracle could exceed it's power; but God does not allow ſuch miracles as theſe, to be wrought by any, whoſe hearts, and affections are not purified, and exalted by a thorough renunciation of the world, and an intercourſe with heaven.

22. 23. As they returned into Galilee, Jeſus reminded his diſciples again, (as it was always his cuſtom to repeat important leſſons) that he ſhould ſoon be delivered into the hands of his enemies, who ſhould put him to death. At the ſame time he told them, that on the third day he ſhould riſe again. This promiſe however, ſo ill-underſtood by them at that time, did not much alleviate their ſorrow.

24. 25. 26. 27. As they entered Capernaum, they were met by a collector of the temple-offerings; who aſked Peter, whether his maſter paid that duty? Peter mentioned the matter to Jeſus, who alluding to his being the ſon of God, for whoſe temple the offering was demanded, declared his right of exemption: Nevertheleſs, ſaid he, that we may give no offence, go to the lake, and in the mouth of the firſt fiſh you take, you ſhall find a piece of money ſufficient to ſatisfy the demand.

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22. The laſt place where we find Jeſus, was at Cæſarea Philippi (Mat. xvi. 13) which was a town on the borders of Iturea. From hence he went to Capernaum, through the upper Gallilee, or *Gallilee of the Gentiles*

27. See a note on chap. xiv. 25, in which I have mentioned this miracle among thoſe of the loweſt claſs. It was certainly however a miracle adapted to fiſhermen; and might tend greatly to increaſe their faith.——Beſides it would be difficult to ſay, how Jeſus could with more propriety have obtained a ſupply. If he had created it on the ſpot, it might have had the appearance of a ſort of legerdemain——or, it might have laid him open to the accuſation of counterfeiting the current coin of the country.

The

The glorious vision, that had just been displayed to the disciples, 1.
had not yet spiritualized their ideas. They had still very low conceptions of Christ's kingdom; and had contentions among themselves who should be the greatest.

To dispel these, Jesus took a child, and placing him before them, 2. 3.
told them, that unless they purified their minds from all ambition, and worldly thoughts, and became in that respect like children, they were by no means properly disposed to be members of his kingdom. The way therefore, added he, to be the greatest in 4.
the kingdom of heaven, is to endeavour to come as near this pattern as possible. These are the persons whom I acknowledge as mine. 5.
He who receiveth such, receiveth me: but he, who purposely 6.
misleads, seduces, or persecutes them, draws on himself a heavy judgment. Offence, and falsehood will ever make a part of the 7.
trials of this world: but woe be to him, who gives the offence, 8. 9.
and propagates the falsehood. Guard therefore against the temptations of the world, which are the principal causes of these mischiefs. Tho it's pleasures, and vanities may be as dear to you, as a hand, or an eye; yet part with them freely, if you have any desire to receive the blessings of the gospel. And let it be your constant 10.
care to encourage, and draw to my fold, these innocent, and sincere searchers after truth. Of such gentle spirits consist the blessed inhabitants of heaven, whose souls the son of man came to 11.
redeem. As a shepherd looks after his straying flock, and receives 12. 13. 14.

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2. This is another instance of the eastern mode of instructing by example. See note on chap. xiv. 15.

6. *Better for him that a mill-stone, &c.* Drowning with a weight about the criminal's neck, was customary; and became proverbial among the Jews for *inevitable ruin.*

10. The words of the text, *their angels do always behold the face of my father,* may bear another very good sense; intimating (in a Jewish mode of expression) that they are under the peculiar care of God's holy ministers; agreeably to the passage of St. Paul (Heb. i. 14.) *are they not ministring spirits, sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation?*

more

more joy from a loſt ſheep recovered, than from thoſe that were ſafe; ſo your heavenly father receives his ſtraying children, and injoins all the miniſters of his goſpel to recover them to his fold.

15. 16. 17. And even after they become your brethren, be not too ſevere. You muſt uſe many means of exhortation with an offender, public, and private; before you can juſtify yourſelf in giving him up. But in
18. 19. 20. the mode of treating offenders, and other matters, ſuch particular ordinances as you make for the government of the church under my general inſtructions, ſhall be eſtabliſhed; and in all difficult caſes be aſſured, that frequent prayer to God will influence his holy ſpirit to direct your conſultations.

21. What Jeſus had been ſaying with regard to *offences*, drew Peter to put a caſe to his maſter, with regard to the forgiveneſs of *injuries*.
22. To what extent, ſaid he, are we to carry this duty? It has no limits, ſaid Jeſus. However often you are injured, if the ſigns of real penitence follow the offence, a chriſtian is *always* bound to forgive. At
23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. his own peril he witholds his forgiveneſs.—Jeſus then gave his diſciples a plain repreſentation of God's dealings with man in this matter, in the following parable.

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19. See Mat. xvi. 19.

19. 20. This ſeems clearly to relate to the miraculous interpoſition of heaven, in the affairs of the infant church.

24. 28. If we ſuppoſe the ten thouſand talents, which the ſervant owed his maſter, were golden talents, the ſum would ariſe to ſeventy-two millions of our money. And if by the hundred pence, are meant, as is probable, an hundred Roman denarii, the amount of them is £3. 2*s*. 6*d*. This calculation however, tho the talents were ſilver, ſhews our Saviour's opinion of the diſparity between the offences, which we commit againſt God, and thoſe, which we commit againſt each other.

34. Some commentators, to ſolve this ſeeming injuſtice of the maſter in *reclaiming* a debt, which he had formally *forgiven*, explain the concluſion of the 27th verſe, as if the maſter had only delayed the exaction of the debt, which was all the ſervant required. But this circumſtance does not at all concern the main point of the parable, to which only we need attend. See a note on Mat. xiii. 44.

A maſter,

A maſter, ſaid he, calling his ſervants to an account, and finding one who owed him infinitely more, than he could poſſibly pay, ordered him, and his family to be ſold, as the law allowed, in part of payment. The man falling on his knees, begged only a reſpite. His maſter pitying his wretched ſituation, forgave him. Yet this very man, going out from his maſter's preſence, and finding a fellow-ſervant, who owed him only a trifling ſum, treated him with violence, and notwithſtanding all his intreaties threw him into priſon. The matter preſently came to his maſter's ears, who calling the ungrateful ſervant, after a ſevere expoſtulation impriſoned him, till his own immenſe debt ſhould be diſcharged.—Such, added Jeſus, is the manner, in which God will treat thoſe, who indulge an implacable hatred againſt their brethren.

CHAP. XIX.

After this Jeſus went from Gallilee into Judea, where he was attended, as uſual, with a multitude of people, whoſe diſorders he healed. 1. 2.

Here ſome of the Phariſees came to him, inquiring, with inſidious intention, whether it were lawful for a man to put away his wife for any cauſe he pleaſed? Jeſus reminded them of the original law of marriage at the creation; and of the indiſſoluble union, which it implied. They aſked, why Moſes then allowed divorces on various pretences? Jeſus anſwered, that Moſes allowed them to prevent worſe conſequences; but that God Almighty's law was ſtill more ancient; and that in fact, whoever divorced his wife, 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.

3. The inſidious intention of the Phariſees ſeems to have conſiſted in their reducing Jeſus to the dilemma of denying his own avowed doctrine (Mat. v. 31) on one hand; or of contradicting the law of Moſes (Deut. xxiv. 12) on the other; which the gloſſes of their rabbies made to allow great liberties in the matter of divorce.

9. Milton, who put away his wife for another cauſe, endeavours to juſtify himſelf by a ſingular interpretation of this text, which would open great latitude——*except for adultery, ſays he; or any thing, which would be to the huſband as grievous, and intolerable as adultery.*

except

except for adultery, and married another, was himſelf an adulterer; and whoever married a woman thus put away, was an adulterer likewiſe.

10. The diſciples afterwards pondering, on what Jeſus had ſaid, told him, they thought, if that were the caſe, it were better to abſtain entirely from marriage.

11. 12. Jeſus ſaid, the neceſſities of the world were ſuch, that men could not generally abſtain: but when wiſe and good reaſons intervened, they had an option.

13. 14. 15. As they were ſpeaking, ſome people, through a great opinion of Jeſus's holineſs, brought young children to him, deſiring, he would lay his hands on them, and bleſs them. The diſciples rather diſcountenancing this, as an unſeaſonable interruption, Jeſus interfered, and calling the children to him, took them in his arms, and bleſſed them. He then propoſed them to the people, as he had done to his diſciples a little before†, as patterns of that innocence, and purity, which he required in thoſe, who were converts to the goſpel.

16. Jeſus ſoon afterwards was met by a young man, who accoſting him under the title of *good maſter*, deſired to know, what he was to do, to obtain eternal happineſs? Jeſus obſerving, that by this
17. addreſs, which belonged only to God, he ſeemed to acknowledge him to be the Meſſiah, told him, that the way to obtain eternal
18. 19. life, was to keep the commandments. The young man deſired to know, which of the commandments? Jeſus mentioned ſeveral; which the

† See Matt. xviii. 2.

18. Some commentators have wiſhed, that our Saviour had been more ample in his advice to the young man, who enquired *the way to eternal life*. He gives him no inſtructions with regard to faith; to the love of God; or the purifying his affections: He prohibits only a few groſs crimes, and orders him to honour his parents; for the precept of *loving his neighbour* is ſuſpected by many, particularly by Origen, to be interpolated; both as it is not one of the commandments, and as it is not mentioned in the parallel places of Mark (x. 19) and Luke (xviii. 20.)

To

the other with great promptneſs, declared he had obſerved from his youth. Jeſus then told him, he would put his religion to the teſt. You have acknowledged me, ſaid he, to be the Meſſiah: let me now ſee the ſtrength of your faith. Give what you have to the poor; truſt God for a treaſure in heaven; and follow me. 20, 21.

The young man, not prepared for ſuch a trial, retired in confuſion; for he was very rich. 22.

Jeſus obſerving to his diſciples, as the young man departed, how very oppoſite the things of this world were to thoſe of the next; You ſee, ſaid he, how almoſt impoſſible it is, for a rich man to be a convert to the goſpel. 23, 24.

The diſciples ſeemed touched with the perilous ſtate of the ſalvation of mankind; as all people had more or leſs, of this world's goods. But Jeſus looking on them with an eye of tenderneſs, ſaid, I ſpeak of thoſe only, who, like this young man, place their happineſs in their wealth. They, who truſt in God, however rich, may, through his divine aſſiſtance, overcome the world. 25. 26.

Here Peter, in the name of himſelf and his brethren, declared they had left all for the ſake of their maſter; and aſked what their 27.

To obviate this objection, it muſt be remembered, what is the ſcope, and aim of the relation before us. This forward young man is not introduced here with a view to be inſtructed in the truths of religion; but merely as an example, to ſhew, how an attachment to the world ſets our principles, and practice at variance. Nor did it ſignify giving *him* any of the purer doctrines of the goſpel, till he had ſhewn, that he had received the firſt great principle of it; that of faith in Jeſus as his *maſter*, whom he plainly ſeemed to acknowledge as the *Meſſiah*. Some commentators indeed ſuppoſe the young man did *not* acknowledge Jeſus to be the Meſſiah; and that Jeſus for this reaſon meant to rebuke him, for calling him *good maſter*; but the progreſs of the narrative, I think, ſeems to require the interpretation I have given; for it was ſurely unreaſonable to expect the young man ſhould ſell all he had, and give it to the poor, and then follow a perſon, of whoſe pretenſions he knew nothing.

24. Some for καμηλον read καμιλον, which makes the ſenſe run, It is eaſier for *a cable-rope*, &c.—But I rather ſuppoſe the common reading right: for a ſimilar expreſſion occurs in the Talmud: "No elephant enters by the eye of a needle."

28, 29. reward ſhould be? Jeſus told them, their reward ſhould be proportionally great; and in general aſſured them, that whoever ſat looſe to the things of the world for the ſake of religion, ſhould be recompenſed abundantly in this life, and everlaſtingly rewarded in a life to come.—But many, he added, who ſeem to be among the moſt diſtinguiſhed, are in fact the leaſt. The Jews particularly, tho the firſt-called, and moſt favoured people, would, like this young man, reject the offers, which God deſigned them. God's equity therefore, ſaid he, in holding out theſe bleſſings to the gentiles, may be thus illuſrated.

30.

CHAP. XX.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

A huſbandman went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard; with whom he agreed at the price of the country. Afterwards, at different times, and even at a late hour, he went out; and finding others ſtanding idle, becauſe they had no offer of employment, he ſent them alſo into his vineyard. In the evening, they were all called together; and all received the ſame wages. But they who had been ſent into the vineyard in the morning, repreſented it as a hard caſe, that they had received no more, than thoſe, who had wrought only a ſhort evening-hour. On this the maſter of the vineyard gave them a ſevere rebuke; "My friends, ſaid he, I have done you no wrong. Have you not received the price, for which we agreed? Take it therefore, and be content. Have not I power to chuſe the objects of my own bounty? Are my kind

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28. The expreſſion, *ye ſhall ſit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael*, ſeems to be only an eaſtern mode of expreſſing the high degree of dignity, which Chriſt promiſed to his apoſtles. As this was ſpoken to the twelve; we cannot ſuppoſe it could be meant in its literal ſenſe of Judas: and St. Paul particularly ſpeaks of himſelf, as expecting future judgment: 1 Cor. iv. 4. and again Rom. xiv. 10.

1. This parable is ſuppoſed to be taken from the Jeruſalem Talmud, only differently applied. It is very evident, that it was our Saviour's method, on all occaſions, to teach by ſuch proverbs, parables, and images, as were the moſt familiar.

intentions

intentions to be reſtrained by your narrow opinions † ?—Thus, added Jeſus, God Almighty grants the gentiles the ſame favours, which he had granted the Jews, if they obey his will as ſoon as they are called. But among ſuch numbers as have received this gracious call, how few are there, who have the wiſdom to accept it!

As Jeſus was now approaching Jeruſalem, he thought it proper, 17, 18, 19.
a third time, to put his diſciples in mind of his ſufferings, and death; and opened this great event ſtill more explicitly to them by adding ſome new circumſtances, particularly that he ſhould be delivered into the hands of the gentiles; but concluded all with an aſſurance, that he ſhould riſe again on the third day. Their 20, 21.
conceptions however of what he meant, were ſtill ſo very low, that the mother of two of them, James, and John, hearing of the reſurrection, and conceiving it to be ſome great event of worldly felicity, came to him, with her ſons, to deſire of him a diſtinguiſhed place for them, in that kingdom, whatever it ſhould be, which he was about to eſtabliſh. Jeſus told her, ſhe 22, 23.
knew not what ſhe aſked—that ſhe did not underſtand the nature of his kingdom—that it did not lead to worldly pomp and glory; but to ſufferings, and death—and tho her ſons might, and certainly ſhould follow his painful ſteps; yet ſeats of diſtinguiſhed eminence in his kingdom were not to be given through favour, or

† As our Saviour's parables have frequently a double view, this parable ſeems not only to illuſtrate the caſe of the Jews, and Gentiles; but the caſe of all individuals of every nation, whom God accepts, according to the improvement of the opportunities they have had.

19. This was very remarkable. It all along appeared, that the intention of the chief-prieſts led to private aſſaſſination, or ſtoning Jeſus in a tumultuary manner. But he now informed his diſciples, of what never entered into any body's head,—*that he ſhould be delivered to the Romans.*—Thus this great event was brought about, by the enemies of the goſpel, in ſuch a way as to confirm the truth of it in the ſtrongeſt manner. *All this was done that the ſcriptures might be fulfilled.*

partiality; but to thoſe only, whom God ſhould ſee properly prepared for them.

24. At theſe ambitious deſigns of the two brothers, the reſt of the diſciples, not wholly devoid of the ſame ideas themſelves, took offence.

25, 26, 27. Jeſus obſerving the heart-burnings, which were thus riſing among them, called them together, and told them, theſe were notions, which belonged only to the ambitious rulers of this world, not to the diſciples of the goſpel. My diſciples, ſaid he, muſt have humble hearts, in which no ambitious thoughts can harbour. They muſt endeavour to be the greateſt, by conſidering themſelves as the leaſt. They muſt condeſcend to be the loweſt on earth, before they can
28. expect to be among the higheſt in heaven. They muſt imitate their maſter, who came into the world, not to be received with pomp; but to ſpend his life in ſufferings, and finally to lay it down as a ranſom for mankind.

29. Jeſus, ſtill in his road to Jeruſalem, by this time had arrived
30. at Jericho, from which town a great multitude followed him. In the road ſat two blind men, who hearing, that he was in the croud, called out, and addreſſing him, by the name of the ſon of
31. David, intreated him to have mercy on them; which cry they
32. continued, tho the people rebuked their importunity. Jeſus, calling
33. them to him, aſked what mercy they wiſhed to receive? They
34. anſwered, the recovery of their ſight. On this he touched their

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24. There cannot be a greater inſtance of ſelf-deceit, than this paſſage affords. In the 27th verſe of the laſt chapter, Peter mentioned his having given up every thing for the ſake of the goſpel; and no doubt believed he ſpoke with great ſincerity: for I ſuppoſe his queſtion, *what ſhall we have therefore*, (introduced, as it is, after the ſtory of the rich man) had reference to ſome *future* retribution. It appears however, both from his being angry at James, and John; and likewiſe from the whole turn of our Saviour's anſwer, that there was ſtill a ſpirit of ambition about him; and that he had ſtill a confuſed idea of receiving ſome great *temporal advantage* from his attachment to his maſter. If ſuch ſelf-deluſion could enter the ſimplicity of an apoſtle's heart, with how much care ought we to guard againſt it!

eyes,

eyes, and they immediately saw clearly, and joined the croud, that attended him.

CHAP. XXI.

Soon after, Jesus arrived at Bethphage, a town situated under the mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem. From hence he sent two of his disciples to a neighbouring village, describing in what circumstances they should find an ass with her colt; and instructing them what to say to the owner, if he should offer to prevent their bringing them. The disciples following their instructions, laid their cloaths on the colt, and set Jesus upon it: while the people, spreading their garments, and strewing leaves, and

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

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5. Zech. ix. 9.——Most of the prophecies of our blessed Saviour were fulfilled by the intervention of other people, without his own concurrence. But this was fulfilled, says the objector, by himself; and certainly there is no great difficulty in fulfilling a prophecy in that way.—But it may be asked, how could such a prophecy be fulfilled in any other way? The objector must consider, that the chief completion of the prophecy lay in the great concurrence of other people, which was necessary to make up the triumph; so that the prophecy could not have been fulfilled by himself alone. The great credit therefore of Jesus assembled the multitude in a manner, which no *other* person could have done.——This whole transaction receives additional force, and propriety, when we consider, that it was the realizing of a typical ceremony, (another mode of prophecy) which was always performed at the feast of tabernacles. The people at that time carried branches of palm, and other trees (see Levit. xxiii. 40.) with which they used to walk in procession, crying *Hosanna*; that is, *save I beseech thee*. These words were always applied by the Jewish rabbies to the Messiah. The people therefore being convinced, that Jesus was the Messiah, applied this ceremony directly to him: and indeed it is evident throughout, that the people were all along disposed to receive him as the Messiah: which they could only be from the miracles, which they saw him work, and the prophetic characters, which they saw him fulfil.——Horses were in little use among the Jews, except in war. All the old patriarchs and prophets rode on asses. Deut. xvii. 16; and Judg. v. 10, &c.

8. It was usual to spread garments under great personages, and especially at the inauguration of kings. "*Then they hasted, and took every man his garment, and put it under him*, (that is, under Jehu) *at the top of the stairs; and blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is king*. 2 Kings ix. 13.

Κλαδος, which is rendered *a branch*, signifies properly a *slight twig*, or the first year's shoot, which may easily be broken. St. Mark (xi. 8) uses the word στοιβαδας, which has nearly the same meaning.—*Branches from the trees* would intangle passengers.

sprigs

ſprigs in the way, went before, and followed with a ſong of triumph, Hoſannah to the ſon of David, bleſſed is he, that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hoſannah in the higheſt. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah, *Tell ye the daughter of Sion, behold thy king cometh unto thee meek, and lowly, ſitting upon an aſs, and a colt the foal of an aſs.*

10. In this manner Jeſus entering Jeruſalem, the whole city was in commotion, every one inquiring, who he was? To which in-
11. quiry voices from every part of the croud were heard, This is Jeſus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee †.

12. At the temple Jeſus alighted, and paſſing through the outward court, he was diſguſted at ſeeing it occupied by buyers, and ſellers; all

† This triumphant entry of our Saviour into Jeruſalem was ſo totally different from every action of his humble life, that there muſt have been ſome very particular reaſon for it. It may be conjectured, that as Jeſus was now about to finiſh the great ſcheme of the redemption of mankind by his death, and reſurrection, he might chuſe to make thoſe wonderful events as public as poſſible; that all mankind might be witneſſes of them. For the ſame reaſon it may be ſuppoſed, our bleſſed Saviour choſe to ſuffer at the time of the paſſover, not only to fulfil more appoſitely the type of the paſchal lamb; but alſo becauſe Jeruſalem was then crouded with ſtrangers, to whom this event ſtill farther notified him.

12. Theſe people ſold oxen, ſheep, doves, and other things neceſſary for the ſacrifices of the temple; on the pretence of furniſhing a ready convenience to the people.—The money-changer was neceſſary to convert into currrent coin, the ſeveral kinds of foreign money, which were brought by proſelytes from various parts of the empire. But as our Saviour thought that all this traffic was improperly carried on within the precincts of the temple, and alſo diſhoneſtly conducted, he judged it right to put a ſtop to it.

Some interpreters ſuppoſe that no *miracle* was here intended; but that the buyers and ſellers durſt not reſiſt Jeſus, then at the head of ſo powerful a body of people—I am not fond of repreſenting our bleſſed Saviour in any light, in which violence is concerned. I think it preſents a grander idea to ſuppoſe, that Jeſus awed them into ſubmiſſion, by the dignity of his perſon and behaviour. It is not uncommon to ſee a multitude ſtruck with awe, on the appearance of a perſon, whom they reſpect. We have a celebrated inſtance of it in our own hiſtory in the caſe of Richard II; who, tho a mere youth, by a ſingle effort of his own, awed into ſubmiſſion an armed and enraged multitude. Much more may we ſuppoſe the divine appearance of Jeſus might awe a venal ſet of people, convicted by their own conſciences; and who we have no reaſon to believe were very numerous. We know that the divine appearance and dignity of Jeſus had

all of whom he drove out; ſaying, It is written, My houſe ſhall be called a houſe of prayer; but you have made it a den of thieves. 13.

The fame of his entrance into Jeruſalem having ſoon ſpread through the city, numbers of ſick people were brought to him in the temple; as had been uſual in all other places; and with the ſame kindneſs, and compaſſion he healed them. 14.

The Scribes, and chief prieſts, who had treated Jeſus with ſo much ſeverity at a diſtance, could not be ſuppoſed to be indifferent to theſe uncommon proceedings in the very place of their juriſdiction. They aſſembled therefore about him; and not daring to apply any direct force, aſked him, Whether he countenanced all that noiſe, and clamour, which the people, and children made around him? Jeſus reminding them of a paſſage in the Pſalms; *Out of the mouth of babes, and ſucklings, thou haſt perfected praiſe*, left them to apply it; and retired to Bethany, a village about a mile from Jeruſalem. 15, 16, 17.

In the morning he returned to the city; and in his way took an opportunity, from a barren fig-tree, which ſtood near the road, to give his diſciples, at this approaching time of trial, a viſible inſtance of the nature of faith. On his finding the fig-tree, flouriſhing in appearance, but without fruit, he forbad it ever again to bear any; and the diſciples expreſſing their ſurprize on ſeeing it wither, Jeſus exhorted them to conſider what they had ſeen as an emblem of barren faith: implying, that when faith was accompanied with works, as the tree ſhould be with fruit, there was nothing ſo difficult, which it 18, 19. 20, 21, 22.

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had that effect, ſoon after, even upon a band of armed ſoldiers. (John xviii. 6) We know alſo that Jeſus himſelf, on another occaſion, diſclaimed all human aſſiſtance: *If my kingdom were of this world, then would my ſervants fight, that I ſhould not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence.* John xviii. 36.

13. See Iſa. lvi. 7. Jer. vii. 11.

16. Pſ. viii. 2.

it might not effect†; as there was nothing more efficacious with God, than prayer founded on faith.

23. As ſoon as Jeſus entered Jeruſalem, he went into the temple, and began to teach the people. But the Scribes, and Phariſees interrupted him; and gathering round, deſired, he would inform them, By what authority he acted in ſo commanding a manner?

24. Jeſus, knowing it was in vain to reaſon with them, anſwered them
25. by a queſtion. Tell me firſt, ſaid he, whether you conſider the miſſion of John the Baptiſt, as divine, or human? This queſtion of his, in fact included an anſwer to theirs; for whatever was the authority of John, ſuch alſo was the authority of Jeſus. It perplexed the Phariſees therefore not a little. If we ſhall acknowledge, ſaid they, the miſſion of John to be divine, it immediately recurs, why
26. then do you not believe in Chriſt, whoſe authority he proved? On the other hand, if we declare, we believe it human, we are in danger from the multitude; for the people believe John to have been a true
27. prophet. They anſwered therefore, they could not tell. It is to no purpoſe then, ſaid Jeſus, for me to give you any further anſwer to the queſtion you demand.

28. Jeſus then ſpoke the following parable: A certain man, ſaid he,
29. had two ſons; whom he ordered to work in his vineyard. One of them at firſt refuſed; but afterwards coming to himſelf, he repented,
30. and went. The other with great reverence, received his father's orders; but in the end never went into the vineyard at all. Which
31. now, continued Jeſus, was the more obedient ſon?

The former undoubtedly, they ſaid.

Jeſus

† This idea indeed is not expreſſed in our Saviour's words; but it is ſo ſtrongly implied in the circumſtances of the action, as to render words needleſs.——*Removing a mountain* is only an eaſtern figure for performing a difficult matter.——It is to be remembered alſo that ſuch a prayer as is here ſuppoſed, will never be directed to improper objects.

31. From the mention made of *publicans* and *harlots*, one ſhould rather be led to ſuppoſe, that Jeſus meant to ſhew the chief prieſts and elders, that ſuch as they eſteemed the moſt profligate

Jesus then, in very plain language, gave them to understand, this was just the case between the Gentile world, and them—and that, in fact, their heathen neighbours were better disposed, than they were, to embrace the gospel. You, said he, will not even acknowledge 32.
the divine mission of John; which the most abandoned of the people acknowledged, and repented on his call.

Jesus then by an apt similitude, represented to them their behaviour 33.
to God under the dispensation both of the law, and the gospel.

A house-holder, said he, planted a vineyard; and having fenced it, and furnished it with every thing proper, put it into the hands of labourers, and took a journey. At the season he sent different servants, 34, 35 36.
at different times, to collect the fruits. But the labourers treated them all with indignity, and cruelty, and even put some of them to death. At last, he sent his son; not doubting but they would treat 37.
him with proper respect. But it fell out otherwise. The labourers 38.
thinking, that if they should destroy the heir, the inheritance should 39.
be theirs, killed even the son himself.——What therefore, added 40.
Jesus, shall the master of the vineyard do to those wicked labourers?

No doubt, said the Pharisees, he will punish them with just 41.
severity; and send other labourers into his vineyard.

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fligate, were nearer the kingdom of heaven, than they were: but from the drift of the parable; and the allusion to two sons, which is not singular (see Luke xv. 11.) it rather appears as if Jesus meant an opposition between the Jews, and Gentiles. See also verse 43 of this chapter.

33. Our Saviour obliquely gives the form of a prophecy to this parable, which is copied, with a very few alterations, from the 5th chapter of Isaiah.——Digging wine-presses, Sir J. Chardin says, is still practised in Persia.

37. *It may be they will reverence my son.* This is merely an ornamental circumstance; for we are assured, God foresaw the death of Christ.

41. Bowyer conjectures, that λεγεσιν αυτω should be omitted. The sense will then be, *What will he do to those husbandmen? He will destroy*, &c. This makes the passage agree with Luke xx. 16, where the chief priests answer, *God forbid!*

42. Did you never read, continued Jesus, *that the stone which the builders rejected, is become the chief stone in the corner*; uniting the different
43. parts of the building together? He then told them, that if they continued thus hardened, all offers of grace should be taken from them, and given to those, who would accept them with gratitude; and that
44. in the end, if they continued impenitent, the weight of that cornerstone, which they had so long despised, should fall upon them, and finally crush them.

45. This conversation so plainly directed against the chief priests, and Pharisees, incensed them to such a degree; that they wished to appre-
46. hend Jesus; but durst not do it at this public season, because of the people, who considered him with the highest veneration as a prophet.

CHAP. XXII. 1. On another occasion, about this time, Jesus represented to the Pharisees, the danger of rejecting the gospel under the following similitude.

2, 3, 4, 5, 6. A prince, said he, on the marriage of his son, made a great feast; and when it was ready, sent his servants to call the guests, whom he had invited. But they instead of accepting the invitation, made light excuses; and some of them even ill-treated his servants. The prince
7, 8, 9, 10. incensed at this behaviour, issued, at the same time, an order to punish those wicked people; and an invitation to other guests. The servants, accordingly gathered all they found, from the roads, and other places of public resort; till the room was intirely filled. The
11, 12, 13. king then coming to see his guests, observed a person, who had not had

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42. Psa. cxviii. 22.

7. *He sent out his troops, and destroyed those murderers, and burnt their city.* This seems to allude to the Roman army destroying Jerusalem. If so, we have at once a parable and a prophecy.

12. This parable was intended chiefly to shew the Jews, that the offers of grace, which they rejected, should be made to the Gentiles. But the latter part of it might be meant to check

had the precaution to put on a wedding-garment. He accosted him in such language, as was due; and finding him without excuse, he punished him as he deserved. From hence Jesus gave his hearers to 14.
understand, that every one, was not among the chosen, *who in appearance accepted the call.*

The Pharisees highly irritated at these discourses; and finding the 15, 16, 17.
difficulty of effecting any thing by violence against Jesus, resolved, if possible, to insnare him in his discourse.

It was a great question among the Jews, at that time, whether, as God's peculiar people, they ought to acknowledge any temporal prince? It was a dangerous question also; as a decision, on one side, might irritate the Romans; and on the other, the Jews. With this insnaring inquiry therefore, the Pharisees dispatched some artful men to Jesus; who pretending great devotion to him on the account of his wisdom, and sanctity; asked him, as if to settle their own consciences, Whether it were lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar?

Jesus knowing their insidious design, bad them shew him the tri- 18, 19.
bute-money. On their producing a Roman penny, he asked whose 20.
image, and inscription it bore? They answered, Cæsar's. Give then 21.
to Cæsar, replied Jesus, the things, which are Cæsar's; and to God, the things which are God's.

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check the presumption of all pretenders to God's favour without endeavouring to deserve it.—It was customary for the bridegroom to prepare garments for his guests. This man is supposed in the parable to have intruded without that requisite.

16. The *Herodians* are mentioned in the text, as accompanying the Pharisees. As they were violent party-men, under Herod, in upholding the Roman power, they were well-chosen witnesses to be present at the conference.

19. The penny, or *denarius*, is a small silver coin, somewhat heavier than a sixpence, tho not so broad. Numbers of them are found, at this day, in various parts of England and other places, where the Romans have been stationed. The denarius was worth about seven-pence half-penny of our money.

21. The Jews accepted this money in payment; and therefore acknowledged Cæsar's right to receive it.

22. An anſwer ſo full of caution, propriety, and wiſdom, aſtoniſhed, and ſilenced them.

23. Theſe people had not long left him, when a body of Sadducees came forward. The Sadducees did not believe in a future ſtate; and brought a queſtion, which appeared to them a direct proof of their
24. point. Maſter, ſaid they, Moſes enjoins, that if a man die without iſſue, his brother ſhall marry his widow, to continue the family.
25, 26, 27. Now we can produce an inſtance of ſeven brethren, who had the
28. ſame wife, one after another. If there be a future ſtate therefore, we ſhould be glad to know, which of thoſe ſeven brethren ſhould claim
29, 30. the woman? Jeſus told them, their ignorance proceeded intirely from their underſtanding neither the ſcriptures, nor the power of God. The ſtate of the next world, he informed them, was not to be upheld
31. by marriage, which ceaſed after this life. He then added, in oppoſition to their general principle, that, if they believed in Moſes, they
32. muſt alſo believe in a future ſtate. What does God mean, ſaid he, when he declares himſelf to be the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob? You cannot ſuppoſe, that he would ſtile himſelf the God of dead people; but of thoſe patriarchs who were ſtill in a ſtate of exiſtence.

35. Theſe things having been ſaid before the multitude, greatly raiſed their admiration of Jeſus. But the Phariſees were differently affected. When they ſaw the Sadducees thus ſilenced, they gathered again about
34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39. him; and one of them, with an inſidious intention, aſked him, which

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32. Our Saviour here reaſons with the Sadducees from Moſes (Exod. iii. 6) as they acknowledged only the Pentateuch.

35. There ſeems to be ſome difficulty in this paſſage. It does not well appear how the queſtion was inſidious; unleſs on ſome ſuch ſuppoſition, as I have made in the text.—(See a note on the parallel paſſage in St. Mark; xii. 28.) This ſuppoſition ſeems the better grounded, as in the very next chapter our Saviour makes the ſame diſtinction. *Ye pay tythe of mint, and aniſe, and cummin; and omit the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith. Theſe ought ye to have done; and not to leave the other undone.* Mat. xxiii. 23.

37. The love of God is one point only of the law—yet if you keep it, you will naturally be led to fulfil every other. So of the ſecond commandment (ver. 39) tho the love of our neighbour

which was the great point in the law? having an eye probably to ſome popular opinions about the ceremonial law. But Jeſus referring him to the moral part of it, laid the ſtreſs on love to God, and man; to eſtabliſh which great points, he ſaid, the ceremonies of the law, 40.
and the writings of the prophets intirely tended.

Jeſus then turning to the Phariſees, aſked them, what their opinion 41, 42.
was of the Meſſiah, as predicted by the prophets; and particularly, whoſe ſon he was? They anſwered, without all doubt the ſon of David.

How is it then, ſaid Jeſus, that David ſpeaking of the Meſſiah, in 43. 44.
the ſpirit of prophecy, calls him Lord; ſaying, *The Lord, ſaid unto my Lord, ſit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footſtool?* 45.
How can he at the ſame time, be David's ſuperior, and inferior?

The Phariſees unable to anſwer this queſtion, were confounded; and 46.
from this time made no further attempt to inſnare him in his diſcourſe.

Jeſus having thus ſilenced the Scribes, and Phariſees, thought CHAP. XXIII.
it right to give the people a juſt notion of them, and their doctrine. 1.
While they continued therefore on the ſpot, he told his diſciples,
and the multitude around him, that as far as the Scribes and Pha- 2, 3.
riſees juſtly expounded the law, their inſtructions were good: But take care, ſaid he, how you follow their example. Their actions,
and their precepts totally differ. However ſtrict they may be to 4.
others; with regard to themſelves, they are ſufficiently remiſs.
The praiſe of men is all they ſeek. For this they add breadth to 5.

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bour alſo is only one point, yet it will naturally engage us to fulfil every other ſocial duty; as explained in Romans xiii. 9, 10.——The paſſages of the law, to which our Saviour alludes, are Deut. vi. 5; and Levit. xix. 18.

44. Pſa. cx. 1.

5. The phylactery was a ſcrap of parchment, inſcribed with ſome paſſage from the law of Moſes, which the Phariſee (interpreting literally Deut. vi. 8; and other ſimilar paſſages) wore on the front of his cap. The fringe was ordered by Moſes, as we read in Numbers xv. 38. He therefore who wore his phylactery, and his fringe, of the largeſt ſize, was thought to be the greateſt devotee.

their

6. their phylacteries, and depth to their fringes. For this they ſeek the higheſt ſeats at entertainments, and in the ſynagogues. For
7. this they give each other ſounding titles, and reſpectable ſalutations.
8, 9, 10, 11, 12. But do not you affect ſuch diſtinctions. Be you humble and lowly-minded; and refer all praiſe to God. To him every degree of *ſelf-exaltation* is diſpleaſing.

13. Then turning again to the Scribes, and Phariſees, Highly guilty, ſaid he, are you in the eye of God, for oppoſing his laſt great diſpenſation in the goſpel. It's gracious offers you will neither yourſelves
14. accept, nor ſuffer others. You hypocritical guides, who ſubſtitute
15. long prayers in the room of works of charity; and make proſelytes only with a view to propagate impiety.

16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. What abſurd diſtinctions make you in oaths? How can you conceive, that an oath by the gold of the temple, or by the gift on the altar, is binding; while oaths by the temple, or altar themſelves, (which, in fact, conſecrate both the gold, and the gift) are invalid? Be aſſured, that he, who ſweareth by the creature (be it under any denomination) ſweareth alſo by the Creator.

23, 24, 25, Look into your guilty lives, you hypocrites. See with what exactneſs you perform each leſs important ceremony; yet how lax you are, at the ſame time, in every moral duty. Your outward deportment is all religious: the ſentiments of your hearts are polluted with every impurity. Like adorned ſepulchres, your outſide is

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15. Horace alludes to this ſpirit of making proſelytes among the Jews.

——————————Ac veluti te
Judæi, cogemus in hanc concedere turbam.
Hor. Sat. i. 4.

16. The Jews had ſtrange, and abſurd diſtinctions about oaths, as appears from various parts of the Talmudic writings.

23. Tythe was paid for the ſervice of the temple. The ſcrupulous exactneſs therefore in paying it, was conſidered by the Phariſees as the perfection of religion.

24. *Strain out a gnat*, rather than *ſtrain at a gnat*.

27. Sepulchres in the eaſt, Dr. Shaw tells us, are ſtill adorned with great care.

fair,

fair, your inſide mere corruption. You build the tombs of the 29, 30, 31.
prophets, and acknowledge yourſelves to be the children of thoſe,
who put them to death; and yet exceed even your fathers in wicked- 32, 33.
neſs. Your hypocriſy indeed may deceive men, but will not enable
you to eſcape the juſtice of God. Apoſtles, and righteous teachers 34, 35, 36.
ſhall be ſent among you; but you ſhall treat them, as your fathers
did the prophets of old—that all the holy blood that hath been ſhed
in the world may be required of this ſinful nation†.—O Jeruſalem, 37.
Jeruſalem, thou city polluted with wickedneſs, how often hath thy
gracious father called thee to repentance! how often hath he made
thee the tendereſt, and kindeſt offers of mercy! but all in vain. Thy 38.
deſolation is at hand. That awful hour approaches, when thy 39.
calamities ſhall at length draw from thee an acknowledgment of the
truth.

CHAP. XXIV.

Jeſus having ſaid theſe things, left the multitude, and retired. 1, 2.
As he went out of the temple, his diſciples obſerved to him the

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29. Joſephus ſays, that Herod was at great expence in beautifying the ſepulchre of David; to which St. Peter alludes, Acts ii. 29.

32. Bowyer conjectures, that *fill ye up*, ſhould rather be in the future; *ye will fill up*.

35. It is a great queſtion who *Zacharias* the ſon of *Barachias* was. What makes it a difficulty, is an account we have in Joſephus of the death of a Zacharias in a future period, attended with circumſtances very ſimilar to theſe of the evangeliſt. Of this the deiſt takes advantage. The evangeliſt, ſays he, could not write at the time he pretends, becauſe he alludes to a fact, which happened thirty years after.—Dr. Lardner, in the firſt volume of his Credibil. ſeems to have ſettled very ſatisfactorily, that our Saviour alludes to that Zacharias, of whom we have an account 2 Chron. xxiv. 20.

† This ſevere invective of our bleſſed Saviour againſt the Scribes, and Phariſees, muſt not be a pattern to us—He knew the hearts of men.——Beſides we muſt diſtinguiſh between what he ſaid, as a prophet of the Lord, and what he ſaid as inſtruction to us. The prophet was appointed to denounce God's vengeance againſt the wicked. Of this we have many inſtances in the old teſtament; and a few in the new.

2. There is no occaſion to conſider this as ſpoken *literally*: and yet we are aſſured by hiſtorians, that it was *almoſt literally* fulfilled. Joſephus tells us, that Titus ordered his ſoldiers to dig up, and overthrow (κατασκαπτειν) the whole temple; except three towers, which he left as a monument of its greatneſs.

grandeur

grandeur of it's various buildings. Grand as they were, he ſaid, the time approached, when one ſtone ſhould not be left upon
3. another. He then aſcended the mount of Olives, and ſitting down in full view of the temple, and all it's ſplendid buildings, his diſciples continued the diſcourſe, and deſired to know, what ſigns ſhould point out the ruin of the Jewiſh nation, and the end of all things?

4, 5. In the firſt place, ſaid Jeſus, guard againſt deception: for many falſe Meſſiahs ſhall ariſe, and miſlead mankind by their deluſions.
6, 7, 8. Wars and famines, peſtilences, and earthquakes ſhall precede that great deſolation. You alſo ſhall be the ſcorn of bad men, who
9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. ſhall treat you with every indignity, and put you to death. You ſhall ſee alſo a great deſertion of the truth. Yet amidſt all theſe falſe prophets, and falſe profeſſors, the goſpel ſhall have made it's way

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3. Jeruſalem was built on a hill; oppoſite to which was another hill, called the mount of Olives. The valley of Cedron ran betwixt them. The foot of the mount of Olives therefore approached very near Jeruſalem, tho ſome of its more retired parts were at a conſiderable diſtance.

3. The diſciples probably had but a confuſed idea of the queſtion. They might ſuppoſe, that the *deſtruction of Jeruſalem*, and the *end of all things*, were concomitant events; alluding to the great Jewiſh diviſion of time, into the age of the law, and the age of the Meſſiah. Their divine maſter however ſeems to take their queſtion literally, as if it included two inquiries. I have endeavoured in the notes to mark the limits of each.

7. All thoſe ſigns, in an eminent degree, preceded the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. Wars, famines, peſtilences, and earthquakes are all mentioned. Joſephus is full of prodigies, which preceded this dreadful event; and even the judicious Tacitus, (Hiſ. v. 13) thus ſpeaks of them. "Many prodigies alſo appeared, which a ſuperſtitious people, averſe to the rites of "religion, refuſed to expiate. Hoſts of men, with glittering arms, were ſeen engaging in the "heavens; while the whole temple ſeemed as if on fire. It's gates were burſt open; and a "voice more than human reſounded over the city, *The Gods have left you.*' Tumultuous noiſes "of multitudes ruſhing out, were at the ſame inſtant heard."—— As to impoſtors, and falſe prophets, which our Saviour emphatically takes notice of, it was indeed chiefly through their deluſions, and promiſes of deliverance, that the Jews were incited to thoſe frequent rebellions, which at length ſo highly incenſed the Romans againſt them. See Acts xxi. 38. and Joſeph de Bell. Jud. ii. 13, 4.

even

even among the Gentiles, before that great event ſhall be accomplifhed†. Then ſhall you ſee the abomination of deſolation ſpoken of by Daniel—the armies, and images of heathen nations, advancing round the city. On theſe prophetic warnings let all who believe, 15. 16. 17. 18.
fly from this devoted place, and pray to God to alleviate calamities, 19. 20. 21.
which ſhall be greater, than the world ever before ſaw; but which 22.
God will graciouſly terminate, in his appointed time, for the ſake of his pious ſervants.—But above all things take care not to be led 23. 24.
away by the deluſions of falſe Chriſts, and falſe prophets, who ſhall endeavour to deceive even thoſe, who are eſtabliſhed in the faith. I have already warned you againſt them; wherever they are 25. 26. 27. 28.
pointed out to you in the deſert, or in the city, believe them not.

The

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† See Rom. x. 18. Coloſſ. i. 6, 23.

15. See Dan. ix. 27. This abomination, probably, refers to the ſetting up of heathen idols in the temple.

16. Joſephus, and Euſebius both inform us, that numbers of Chriſtians fled from the calamities of the ſiege; and the latter expreſly mentions Pella, a town on the banks of Jordan, where they found an aſylum.

20. *Pray that your flight be not in the winter.* The Talmudiſts expreſs themſelves to the ſame effect. *The Lord ſhewed mercy on Iſrael. They ſhould have been carried away to Babylon in the tenth month, when all would have periſhed by the winter: but God prolonged the time; and they were led away in the ſummer.*

23. 24. Some interpreters do not ſuppoſe this to be a repetition; but that as the former falſe prophets appeared as ſigns *before* the ſiege; theſe appeared *during* the continuance of it. It is true ſuch falſe pretenders did ariſe *during* the ſiege; but I think our Saviour ſtill ſpeaks of the former. All Chriſtians were expreſsly warned to fly *from* the ſiege; and as we are aſſured, they did, they were in no danger of being deceived by any falſe prophets, *after* the ſiege had commenced.

28. If I be not ſatisfied with the interpretation of this verſe, which I have here offered; I muſt own, I am as little ſo, with the uſual interpretations. I cannot think that the *eagles* here are meant to denote either the ſwiftneſs of the Meſſiah's coming; or the Roman ſtandards, on which eagles were portrayed. Perhaps the beſt ſenſe of all is, that it is a proverbial expreſſion, ſignifying, that wherever the enemies of religion are; there, at ſome time or other, the vengeance of heaven will *overtake them*; of which Jeruſalem ſhould be a ſignal example.—But tho this interpretation may agree perhaps better with the *words*; yet the interpretation I have given ſeems to agree better with the *context*; in which our Saviour is oppoſing the true

The coming of the real Meſſiah, like lightening, pervades every part of the world: while falſe Meſſiahs, like eagles flocking to their prey, have always ſome partial end, or quarry in view.

29. 30. 31. Then will approach the awful time, when nature diſſolving before the ſon of God, and all the tribes of the earth mourning in conſcious guilt, he will ſend forth his heavenly miniſters, and make the grand ſeparation of good and bad.

32. 33. Thus as the budding of the tree ſhews you the approach of ſummer; ſo let the ſigns I have given you, point out that great event,
34. 35. about which you inquire. Nor is it far diſtant. This generation, be aſſured, ſhall ſee it fulfilled.

36. As to that other great event, the end of all things, God hath reſerved that as a ſecret with himſelf. Be the time of it however when

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Chriſt to the falſe pretenders, that ſhould ariſe.—This interpretation, I think, ſeems to have ſtruck Mr. Addiſon, as the juſt one: It is probable he alludes to this paſſage, and to this explanation of it, in the following words; "How elſe, during the apoſtles lives, could Chriſ-"tianity have ſpread itſelf with ſuch an amazing progreſs, through the ſeveral nations of the "Roman empire? How could it fly like lightening, and carry conviction with it from one "end of the earth to the other?" Addiſon's evidences, &c.

31. From the ſudden deſtruction of Jeruſalem here firſt our Saviour (whoſe conſtant practice it was to draw every ſubject to ſome uſeful point) ſeems to make a tranſition to the end of the world; and to temporal death, which may be conſidered as the end of the world to every individual. The idea, which ſeems particularly to ſtrike him, and give occaſion to the tranſition, is the ſeparation, which ſhould be made between thoſe, who ſhould be deſtroyed in the ſiege of Jeruſalem; and thoſe who ſhould eſcape from it.—If the reader wiſhes to ſee an ample, and very ſatisfactory account, of the prophetical mode of blending different ſubjects; and of paſſing with rapidity from one to another, he may find it in the biſhop of London's note on the 13 verſe of the lii. chapter of Iſaiah.—Some interpreters conceive, that in theſe paſſages our Saviour conſiders the deſtruction of Jeruſalem as a type of the concluſion of all things; and in this view mixes the colours of both cataſtrophies together. It is not indeed very eaſy to make the ſeparation. Thoſe grand images employed in the 29th verſe, *the ſun ſhall be darkened—the moon ſhall not give her light, and the ſtars ſhall fall from heaven*—are certainly much uſed by the prophets to denote the fall of nations. See Iſa. xiii. 10—xxxiv. 4. Ezek. xxxii. 7.—Joel ii. 30.

36. Some very judicious critics make the words ημερα εκεινη refer, as I have here referred them, not to the preceding verſes; but to the concluſion of the 31ſt verſe.—Indeed, I think, it

when it may, it will come ſuddenly on the world. The days of 37. 38. 39.
Noah are an emblem of that great, and awful viſitation. Careleſs, and inattentive, the buſy world was then employed in all the ordinary offices of life, when the flood came ſuddenly upon them, and ſwept them away. Such alſo ſhall be that other great event— 40. 41.
ſudden, and, in appearance, undiſtinguiſhing, carrying off, and leaving behind, people in outward circumſtances exactly the ſame.

Be therefore continually on your guard. If the hour of death 42. 43.
had been pointed out to man, he would have been ſatisfied merely with a partial vigilance. But it is God's will, that the hour ſhould 44.
be concealed, that man may be always ready.

Let each of you therefore endeavour to be that faithful ſteward, 45.
with whom his lord ſhall intruſt his family-affairs. Bleſſed, and 46. 47.
kindly rewarded ſhall that ſervant be, whom his lord, when he comes ſuddenly, ſhall find in his duty. On the other hand, if he ſhall 48.
wickedly incourage himſelf in the hopes of his lord's delay; and 49.
inſtead of imploying his time properly, ſhall ſpend it in acts of intemperance, and oppreſſion; his Lord ſhall come ſuddenly 50.
upon him; and appoint him that puniſhment, which he ſo well 51.
deſerved.

Ten virgins, ſaid Jeſus continuing the ſubject, took their lamps CHAP. XXV.
to meet the bridegroom in a marriage ceremony. Such of them
as were prudent, took with them a ſupply of oil, which the others 1. 2. 3. 4.

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it rather implies a contradiction, if it be otherwiſe; for our Saviour ſays plainly, that the deſtruction of Jeruſalem ſhould happen during *this generation*. How then could he ſay the time was *a ſecret?*—Some have held, that οἶδεν ſignifies here (as it does 1 Cor. ii. 2) to *make known*, or *declare:* but I think we need no ſuch declaration to ſhew the abſurdity of ſuppoſing that men could *make known*, or *declare* either the laſt judgment, or the deſtruction of Jeruſalem.

51. *Cutting aſunder* was a puniſhment literally uſed by ſome tyrants. Multos honeſti ordinis medios ſerra diſſecuit. Sueton. in vitâ Calig.

5. had neglected. In the mean time, till the proceſſion approached,
6. they repoſed. But in the middle of the night, ſudden notice was
7. given of the bridegroom's coming. On this all the virgins aroſe
8. 9. 10. ſpeedily to trim their lamps. The wiſe were inſtantly ready; but the
11. 12. imprudent virgins were thrown into great confuſion. Then firſt they perceived their neglect. Their lamps were expiring; and they had no oil to refreſh them. While they endeavoured to procure a ſupply, the bridegroom entered; the door was ſhut; and all admit-
13. tance denied.—Be you therefore prepared, added Jeſus, and always ready; for you know not at what hour you may be called.

14. And that you may always be prepared, take care to uſe thoſe bleſſings, whatever they are, which God hath given you, to the beſt advantage. God's diſpenſations to man, with regard to his various gifts may be thus illuſtrated.

A maſter of a family, going from home, left in the hands of his ſervants ſeveral ſums of money; which he ordered them to improve
15. againſt his return. To one he gave five talents; to another two; and to a third, one; proportioning the ſeveral ſums to the abilities of
16. 17. each. He who had received five talents; and he who had received
18. two, trading with them, doubled each his original ſum; while he, who had received only one talent, inſtead of making any uſe of it,
19. hid it in the ground.——After ſome time, the maſter returning
20. 21. 22. home, called his ſervants to account. They, to whom he had
23. truſted the larger portions, paid into his hand, the gains they had acquired,

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6. The Jewiſh marriages were celebrated in the night, when the bride was led home by torch-light. It was cuſtomary indeed in many other countries. Statius introduces the nine Muſes with their lamps, leading a bride home:

> Demigrant Helicone Deæ, quatiuntque novenâ
> Lampade ſolemnem thalamis coeuntibus ignem.
>
> Syl. lib. 2.

23. The doctrine inculcated in this parable is, that whether we are in high circumſtances, or low, if we *improve our talents equally*, our *reward alſo ſhall be equal*; which is a moſt comfortable

acquired, together with the original ſums; and each received commendation, and a proportioned reward. Afterwards, he who had 24. 25.
hid his talent in the ground, coming with much contradictory apology, which only increaſed his offence, returned the talent he had received, intirely unimproved. His lord, giving him a ſevere rebuke; in 26. 27. 28. 29. 30.
which he pointed out to him, from his own excuſe, his ſlothful, and negligent behaviour, puniſhed him with proper ſeverity; and gave his unemployed talent to him, who had already ten; ſaying, That more ſhould ſtill be given to thoſe, who improved what they had; while they who neglected even a little, ſhould not only loſe that little, but ſuffer for the neglect.

Jeſus concluded his divine diſcourſe, with a repreſentation of the 31. 32. 33.
laſt judgment. When the ſon of man, ſaid he, ſhall appear in his glory; ſitting on his throne with all the holy angels around him, then ſhall be aſſembled before him all the nations of the earth; whom he ſhall ſeparate, and divide, as a ſhepherd divides his flock.—To them on 34.
his

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fortable doctrine to thoſe in low ſtations. The *ſtation* is nothing; the *improvement* is all.—This doctrine is mentioned by Mr. Necker, the French financier, as one of the *diſtinctive characters* of the morality of the goſpel, in his excellent book on the Importance of religious ſentiments.

29. *From him that hath not, ſhall be taken away even that which he hath.* Thus Juvenal, in a ſimilar manner expreſſes himſelf.

Nil habuit Codrus——et tamen illud
Perdidit infelix nil————————

31. In the former parable our Saviour had ſhewn, that we ought to improve our talents; in this, he proceeds a ſtep further, and ſhews *in what manner* we ought to improve them—in acts of mercy, and kindneſs to each other.

31. Some fix the tranſition to a future judgment at this verſe. The 40th, and 41ſt verſes of chap. xxiv. have indeed no relation to a laſt judgment; but they are very deſcriptive of the indiſcriminate manner, in which death carries off mankind: and the 42d, and following verſes apply more to this idea, than to the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. So does all the beginning of the xxvth chapter.

34. The phraſe in the original, *which hath been prepared for you from the foundation of the world*; has often been brought to countenance God's abſolute decrees. But ſurely it is preſſed harſhly

35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. his right hand, he ſhall thus ſpeak: Come, ye bleſſed, inherit that ſtate of happineſs, which hath been prepared for you—that recompence, which ye ſhall now reap for all thoſe many acts of kindneſs, and mercy, which I have received at your hands. They with great modeſty will profeſs, they never had any opportunity of doing him ſervice. To me, in my own perſon, he will ſay, you have not: but I take to myſelf thoſe kind offices, which on earth you ſo tenderly performed to others.——Then turning to thoſe on his 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. left hand he will ſay, Depart from me to that ſtate of miſery, which your wicked, and impenitent hearts deſerve. He will then remind them of that want of tenderneſs, and compaſſion, which they had ſhewn to him, through the whole courſe of their lives. On their aſſerting their innocence, he will inform them, that their unkind and cruel behaviour to their brethren, was the ſame to him, 46. as if it had been ſhewn to himſelf.——The awful ſentence having paſſed, the final doom ſhall ſucceed: the former ſhall take poſſeſſion of everlaſting happineſs; the latter ſhall be doomed to everlaſting CHAP. XXVI. miſery——Jeſus having thus brought his heavenly diſcourſe to a 1. 2. point, before he concluded it, reminded his diſciples once more, but with

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harſhly into this ſervice; and can only be ſuppoſed to mean, by the faireſt rules of interpretation, that the kingdom of heaven is prepared from the foundation of the world, for thoſe who render themſelves worthy of it.

35. From the *general tenor* of ſcripture we are not to ſuppoſe that the ſtreſs is laid on occaſional acts of mercy, or any acts of mercy at all, unleſs they flow from a true Chriſtian motive—the devoting of ourſelves, and all our acts of mercy to God. And yet we may ſuppoſe, that when the habit of benevolence is formed, an act of kindneſs to a fellow-creature, which flows from this principle, may find its reward, tho we may not think, at the time of performing that act, of its being required by God.

46. It may be remarked here, that the *ſame* word, (αιωνιον,) is uſed to expreſs both *future puniſhments*, and *future rewards*. One ſhould ſuppoſe therefore it means to place the duration of both, on the ſame footing.

1. Here our Saviour concludes that elevated diſcourſe, which began at the xxivth chapter, on a queſtion propoſed by the diſciples, with regard to the time of the deſtruction of the temple.

From

with an exactneſs as to time, which he had not yet obſerved, that within two days the feaſt of the paſſover ſhould be celebrated; and that he ſhould then be betrayed into the hands of his enemies, who ſhould put him to death.

His enemies were indeed then conſulting againſt him. A meeting 3.
of the chief prieſts, Scribes, and elders was held at the palace of Caiphas the high prieſt, with a view to put a ſtop to the growing influence of Jeſus, and his doctrines: and the queſtion was, Whe- 4. 5.
ther it was adviſable to apprehend him, and put him to death? But his credit with the people, and the difficulty of doing it, were ſuch, that after much debating, it was thought an improper ſtep; at leaſt during the enſuing feſtival.

In the mean time, Jeſus retired to Bethany, to the houſe of Si- 6
mon, whom he had formerly cured of a leproſy. Here a woman 7.
coming in, reſpectfully anointed his head with very coſtly ointment; 8. 9.
at which the diſciples taking offence, called it a needleſs waſte; and ſaid, That ointment of ſuch value, might have been ſold for a con-
ſiderable ſum; and given to the poor. But Jeſus told them, ſhe had 10.
done well. You have the poor, ſaid he, always with you: but me 11.
you have not always. I conſider this action therefore as an embalm- 12.

From that event Jeſus takes occaſion to ſpeak of the conſummation of all things; blending with it the mortality of man, which to every individual has the effect of that conſummation. From thence he proceeds (ſtill parabolically) to ſhew, in chap. xxv, the duty of preparation for that great event. This very naturally introduces the parable of the ten talents; which ſhews, that every man has his gifts varied by Providence; that *his proper* preparation muſt conſiſt in the improvement of thoſe gifts; and that it will be expected the improvement ſhall be in proportion to the gift.——Then the laſt great ſcene opens—the general judgment; when all men ſhall be rewarded, and puniſhed according to the uſe, or abuſe, of their ſeveral gifts. Here our Saviour ſhews, how much the ſtreſs ſhall be laid on acts of mercy, and kindneſs. Thus he brings his diſcourſe home to the feelings of men: and draws this divine inſtruction to one noble, grand, and intereſting concluſion.

5. The Romans at the time of the paſſover, were ſo much afraid of inſurrections, that they always doubled their city-guard.

ing

13. ing of my body before my burial: and in whatever light you may consider it, it shall always be remembered in her favour.

14. 15. 16. It was at this time that Judas Iscariot, leaving Jesus, and his fellow-disciples privately, went to the chief priests, and offered to betray his master to them. They had at that time, dropped the design of apprehending Jesus at the passover: but on such an offer they resumed it, and agreeing with Judas for a sum of money, they sent him back with instructions to give them the earliest notice of his master's privacy.

17. In the mean time the passover approaching, the disciples asked
18. Jesus, where he would have it provided? He bad them go into the city; where they should find a person circumstanced as he described; to whom they should make known his intention of eating the pass-
19. 20. over at his house. This was accordingly done. The passover was provided; and Jesus went with his disciples to celebrate it in the evening.

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14. It is probable that Judas had all along followed Jesus through *temporal views*; but being now at length convinced, that his expectations had no grounds; and having no faith in his master's *spiritual promises*, he deliberated, how he might turn the mistake he had made in life to the best advantage.

15. If the thirty pieces of silver were shekels (as they probably were) it was the price of a slave (Exod. xxi. 32) which is very remarkable.——The sum amounted to about £3. 15s. of our money.

16. The Jews had dropped the design of apprehending Jesus, because of the people; but having now gotten an opportunity of seizing him privately in the night, they determined to have him examined by the high priest, and condemned by the Roman governor early in the morning, before the people could get together; and if they could put him fairly into the hands of the Roman soldiery, there was no further fear of rescue——All this was executed, as it had been planned.

20. Bp. Pearce inserts here an excellent note, in which he discusses the point, whether the paschal lamb was killed in private houses, or only in the temple. Philo is his authority for the former supposition: Josephus for the latter. After weighing both sides, he inclines to Philo.

In

In the midſt of ſupper, Jeſus told them openly, that one of them 21.
ſhould betray him. All enquired with great earneſtneſs, and marks 22.
of ſorrow, which of them he meant? Jeſus told them, it was one, 23.
who even then eat with him. It is neceſſary, ſaid he, that the ſon 24.
of man ſhould die: but that neceſſity is no excuſe for him, by whom
he is betrayed. That man's ſin is great indeed.

On this Judas himſelf had the boldneſs to aſk Jeſus, whether he 25.
were the perſon? To which Jeſus replied in ſuch language as
ſhewed plainly, that he was.

Jeſus then taking bread, bleſſed, and brake it, and gave it to his 26.
diſciples, ſaying, Eat this in remembrance of my body that is given
for you. Then taking a cup, he bleſſed it likewiſe; and bad them 27. 28.
all drink of it, in remembrance of his blood, that was ſhed for the
remiſſion of ſins. He then told them he appointed this commemo- 29.
ration in the room of the Jewiſh paſſover.

After they had thus celebrated the paſſover, they ſang an hymn, 30.
and retired to the mount of Olives.

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23. *He that dippeth with me in the diſh*; that is, in the baſon of vinegar, in which the Jews dipped their bitter herbs at the celebration of the paſſover.

25. We have here one of thoſe frightful examples of hardened wickedneſs, often ſeen in common life, which againſt all admonition, checks, and remonſtrances, obſtinately perſeveres in ſome wicked deed, which has been undertaken. Even in improved underſtandings, we often find the corrupt heart hath its reaſonings to ſupport the *wickedeſt actions*, againſt the *ſtrongeſt conviction*.

29. This paſſage in the original is obſcure: but if we compare it with Luke xxii. 16, and likewiſe with the event, we are led to ſuppoſe this to be the moſt conſiſtent meaning, which the words will admit. *I will not drink henceforth*, I will have the paſſover now aboliſhed; and wine ſhall be henceforth drunk in a new way, as I inſtitute it. *Till I drink it*, may be an expreſſion equivalent to its being done by my appointment.

30. The words in the original will bear to be tranſlated, they *repeated* a hymn, or thankſgiving.—It is not every body, perhaps who can ſing; and therefore pſalmody cannot be impoſed as a duty.

31. Then Jesus again reminded them of his approaching sufferings. This night, said he, will put your constancy to the test—That prophecy of the Messiah shall be fulfilled; *I will smite the shepherd,*
32. *and the sheep shall be scattered.* Be not however discouraged: when I am risen again, I will meet you in Galilee.

33. Peter grieved to think, that Jesus had any doubt of the constancy of his disciples, declared, that for himself at least, nothing could ever shake his fidelity.

34. Jesus checking his confidence, assured him, that, that very night, before the cock should crow, he should three several times deny him.
35. Peter with the same earnest zeal cried out, he might die with him; but to deny him, was impossible: to which the other disciples assented.

36. 37. Jesus proceeding a little farther to a part of the mount of Olives called Gethsemane, from the oil-presses, which were there, bad Peter, James, and John follow him to a more retired part of the
38. 39. mountain. Here he was in great agony, which drew from him strong expressions of distress. Then leaving the three disciples a few paces, and ordering them to watch, he fell on the ground, and prayed, saying, O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from
40. me; nevertheless not as I will; but as thou wilt. Returning to

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31. Zech. xiii. 7.

39. What the particular circumstances were, which in so high a degree imbittered the death of our blessed Saviour, we are not told; but certainly they must have been circumstances of a very aggravating nature, which could draw from so exalted a character those impassioned expressions, both before, and at the time of his death. How far the guilt of a sinful world, and the office of atonement, might aggravate his last sufferings, who can tell? In the other evangelists, especially in St. Mark, our blessed Saviour's agonies in the garden, are expressed in still stronger terms.

40. We may suppose, what is not improbable from the whole tenor of the relation, that the disciples were not *literally asleep*; tho not in that wakeful, vigilant disposition, which so great a crisis required.

them,

them, he found them asleep. What, said he to Peter, could you not watch one hour with me? Watch, and pray, that God may enable 41.
you to bear this great trial, which is coming upon you. The spirit indeed is willing; but the flesh is weak. Then leaving them again, 42.
he cried with great earnestness, O my father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it; thy will be done! A second time 43. 44.
finding them asleep, he went away, and prayed in the same impassioned manner; and finding them asleep a third time; he awoke 45. 46.
them; saying, The cause of your watching is now over. But new trials approach. The hour of darkness is at hand. I am now betrayed into the power of my enemies.

He had scarce spoken, when a number of armed men from the 47. 48. 49.
chief priests, and elders entered the place, with Judas at their head; 50.
who according to a sign agreed on, coming up to Jesus, saluted him. Jesus asking him his intention, the armed men immediately came upon him, and seized him. One of the disciples seeing such violence 51.
offered to his master, drew a sword, and struck a person near him, who happened to be one of the servants of the high-priest, and cut off his ear. Jesus rebuking this violent disposition in general, and 52.
especially on this occasion, said if he wanted aid, it were easy for 53.

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41. *The spirit indeed is willing: but the flesh is weak.* The tenderness of this excuse is inimitable; and its being uttered in the midst of the greatest distress, is a noble example to us.—I cannot conceive on what grounds any commentators, as some do, suppose Jesus to speak of himself.

42. The best commentators suppose, that Jesus did not pray for the *removal of death*; which indeed would have been inconsistent with the whole scheme of redemption; John xii. 27: but only for the removal of those sufferings (whatever they were) which he then underwent. See Mark xiv. 35, where this *cup* is explained to mean this *hour*.

45. This great indifference in the disciples, shewed how little they were yet affected with the magnitude of that event, in which they were now about to be involved.——Bowyer conjectures the expression, *sleep on now, and take your rest*; should rather be put interrogatively; *do you still sleep on, and take your rest?* This certainly makes the sense better.

47. It is probable, that when Jesus retired from the other disciples at Gethsemane, Judas took that opportunity to slip away, and go to the chief priests.

54. him to apply for it in any proportion from heaven. But how then, he added, would this great work, in which I am engaged, be accomplifhed?

55. Then turning to the armed men, he afked them, why they came in that forcible, and fecret manner to apprehend him in the night? and why, if they had law, and juftice on their fide, they did not apprehend him openly in the temple, where he might always have
56. 57. 58. been found?——But your employers, faid he, unwittingly fulfil the great fcheme of God, and all the prophecies that introduce it.

From Gethfemane the guards immediately led Jefus to the palace of Caiphas, the high prieft, where the elders of the Jews were already affembled.

The difciples, in the mean time, feeing that all was now over, took the means of fecuring themfelves by flight: but Peter, following at a diftance, entered the palace, and mixing with the fervants, waited the event.

59. 60. 61. As foon as Jefus was brought before the high-prieft, every method was ufed to fuborn evidence againft him: and tho many falfe witneffes were produced, yet nothing criminal, in any degree, could be made out. At length two men depofed, that they had heard him fay, *he was able to deftroy the temple of God, and to build it in*
62. *three days*. It was well known in what figurative fenfe Jefus had ufed that expreffion. However the high-prieft, rifing from his feat, took it up, as if it had contained criminal matter; and afked Jefus,
63. what he had to fay in his defence? Jefus was filent: on which the

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56. I render this verfe, according to a conjecture of Bowyer's, who would tranflate, τυτο. δε ολον γεγονεν, *all this is done*; which makes them the words of Chrift. According to our tranflation, they are the words of St. Matthew.

high-prieft

high-prieſt adjured him, by the living God, to ſay, whether he were the Meſſiah, the ſon of God?

Jeſus thought proper to anſwer him in the affirmative; and added, 64.
that the Jewiſh nation ſhould ſhortly ſee a dreadful inſtance of his power; when they ſhould be called to a ſevere account for their infidelity, and impenitence.

Then the high-prieſt tearing his garment as if in horror at hearing 65.
ſuch impieties, cried out, What need we further witneſſes? you all hear his blaſphemy.

The whole aſſembly with one mouth, aſſenting, he was pro- 66.
nounced guilty.

Jeſus was then left in the hands of the high-prieſt's ſervants; who 67. 68.
ſeemed as if licenſed to exerciſe every degree of indignity, they could invent.

While theſe things were tranſacting, Peter ſat with the ſervants 69.
in the hall, where he was challenged by a maid-ſervant, who drew the attention of the reſt upon him, by declaring, that ſhe had ſeen him with Jeſus of Galilee. Peter avowed ſolemnly before them all, 70.
that he knew nothing of the matter. However not thinking him- 71.
ſelf ſufficiently ſafe, he went out into the portico; where another maid ſaw him; and told thoſe who were ſtanding near, that, that perſon (pointing to Peter,) had been ſeen with Jeſus of Nazareth. Peter overhearing her, denied it with an oath, declaring he did not ſo 72.
much as know the man. Others coming up, told Peter, he certainly 73.
was one of them, for his very ſpeech diſcovered him to be a Galilean.——But Peter in great agitation, denied with many impre- 74, 75.
cations, that he knew any thing of Jeſus. Soon afterwards hearing

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65. The rabbies ſay, that *he who heareth blaſphemy, is bound to rend his garments: and the garments thus rent, are never again to be repaired.*

a cock

a cock crow, he remembered the words of his maſter; and retiring to a ſecret place, gave vent to the moſt imbittered paſſion of grief.

CHAP. XXVII.

1. 2. As Judea was a Roman province, the Jews could not legally put a criminal to death. Being reſolved however to proceed againſt Jeſus in a legal way; and thinking they had now obtained ſufficient matter of accuſation againſt him, they carried him very early in the morning before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor.

3. In the mean time, Judas, finding, (what perhaps he did not expect) that his maſter was condemned; carried back to the chief prieſts, in an agony of deſpair, the money he had received; as if
4. hoping to undo the horrid deed he had committed. In vain he told them, that he had betrayed an innocent perſon. Anſwers of levity,
5. and ſcorn were all that he received. Diſtracted by his guilty thoughts, he threw down the money in the temple; and ruſhing out, put an end to his life.

6. 7. The chief prieſts afterwards, not thinking it proper to place this money among the offerings of the temple, laid it out in a burying-
8. ground for ſtrangers: from whence that field was afterwards called
9. 10. *aceldama*, or the field of blood. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of

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2. The Roman governor uſually reſided at Cæſarea; but he often came to Jeruſalem at the great feaſts, to prevent diſturbances.

3. Theſe were ſome of the prieſts employed in the miniſtration of the temple, equally in conſpiracy againſt Jeſus, but not among thoſe, who led him to Pilate.

5. Απηγξατο may ſignify *deprived of breath*; and the beſt way to reconcile what is ſaid of the death of Judas here, with what is ſaid of it in Acts i. 18, may perpaps be, that when he had thrown down the money, he ran out of the temple, and in a fit of deſpair, threw himſelf down one of the precipices, on which it ſtood.

7. Thirty pieces of ſilver was a trifling price for a field near Jeruſalem: but we muſt conſider, it had been dug up for earth for potters-veſſels; and therefore of little value in itſelf, tho ſufficiently good for the purpoſe intended. It might alſo have been, as it probably was, a very ſmall plot of ground.

10. It is remarkable, that this prophecy is not found in Jeremiah, but in Zechariah (xi. 13.) Many things have been ſaid to rectify this miſtake; but nothing is more common than the

of Jeremiah: *they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, and gave them for the potter's field.*

Jesus being brought before the governor, was accused chiefly of a design to erect a new kingdom in Judea, in opposition to the Romans. This was supposed to be the best plea they could urge. Pilate, who did not seem to lay much stress upon it; and yet could not intirely neglect it, carelesly asked Jesus, whether he pretended to be the king of the Jews? Jesus told him, that his kingdom was of a very different nature from the kingdoms of this world. 11.

The chief priests then brought other accusations against him; to which Jesus gave no answer, leaving the governor, who was not a little surprized at his silence, to make what use he pleased of the several charges they brought. 12. 13. 14.

Pilate however clearly saw, that the whole prosecution was malicious. He was greatly inclined also to favour Jesus from a private motive. He had just received a message from his wife; informing him, that she had been greatly affrighted that morning in a dream, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

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the mistake of one name for another. Some original transcriber might first have made it: from whence it might have been copied by others. Bp. Hall's conjecture is ingenious, that the abbreviation of Ζρῖα might have been mistaken for Ιρῖα: but Wetstein expresly says, that neither this abbreviation, nor any similar one, is to be found, *ne quidem junioris ævi codice ullo, nedum in vetustioribus.*——Others say, that *Jeremiah*, which was placed at the head of the prophets, is mentioned as the *title* only; as the *Psalms* (Luke xxiv. 44) for the same reason include other books of scripture.——Others again explain this difficulty, by saying that the four last chapters of Zechariah were written by Jeremiah. See Mede's works p. 709. 963. 1022.

11. See John xviii. 36.

14. It appears, that Jesus answered both Pilate, and the chief priests, to proper, and pertinent questions, *Art thou the Christ? Art thou the king of the Jews?* But to frivolous questions, he made no answer to either.

19. From this account it appears, how very early in the morning Pilate had sat in judgment, with a view no doubt to oblige the chief priests, (see a note on Matt. xxvi. 16). It may be further remarked on this passage, that among heathen superstitions it was one, that morning-dreams were the most ominous.

on

on account of the innocent perſon, whoſe cauſe was then before him; and begged he would have no further hand in it. He determined therefore within himſelf on an expedient, which he thought might ſave Jeſus.

It was a cuſtom at the feaſt of the paſſover, for the governor to releaſe ſome priſoner, at the option of the people; and as there happened to be at that time, in priſon, one Barabbas, a very notorious offender; Pilate propoſed this perſon, and Jeſus, to the people for their option: not doubting, but that, prejudiced as they were, they would give Jeſus the preference to a murderer. But he found
20. 21. himſelf miſtaken. When he put the queſtion, all preſent (who at that early hour, ſeem to have conſiſted chiefly of the high-prieſt's
22. ſervants, and retainers) demanded Barabbas. What then, ſaid Pilate, ſhall I do with Jeſus? They all cried out, Let him be
23. crucified. But what offence, ſaid Pilate, hath he been guilty of? On which the clamour increaſed, Let him be crucified.

24. Pilate ſeeing plainly, that all he ſaid, ſerved only to increaſe the tumult, called for water, and waſhing his hands before them all, ſaid, I am innocent of the blood of this juſt perſon. Let it be
25. your doing. On this they all vehemently cried out, His blood be

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24. This mode of purification was both a ſacred, and a heathen cuſtom. The author of the 73d pſalm ſpeaks of *waſhing his hands in innocency*; and Virgil introduces Æneas ſaying,

> Me, bello e tanto egreſſum, et cæde recenti,
> Attrectare nefas, donec me flumine vivo
> Abluero————

Æn. II. 718.

25. It is remarkable that Joſephus, in his deſcription of the ſiege of Jeruſalem, tells us, that ſuch numbers of the Jews were crucified by the Romans, "that there wanted wood for "croſſes, and room to place them."

25. The timidity of Pilate in thus giving up an innocent perſon to the clamour of an enraged multitude, is eaſily accounted for, by the awe, under which all Roman governors ſtood, of the leading perſons in their ſeveral provinces; who had it in their power to complain of mal

be on us, and on our children! Pilate therefore at length overcome by their clamour, releaſed Barabbas; and condemned Jeſus to be ſcourged, and crucified.

He was then delivered into the hands of the ſoldiers, who had the 27.
care of the execution; and was carried into the guard room. Here the whole cohort being called together, adorned him with a ſcarlet robe; and putting a crown of thorns on his head, and a reed 28, 29.
in his right hand, bowed the knee before him, crying, Hail, king of the Jews. Then riſing from their knees, they ſpit upon him, 30.
and taking the reed out of his hand, they ſtruck him with his own mock-ſceptre. Having thus ſatiated their brutal malice, they put 31, 32, 33.
his own garments on him, and led him to a place called Golgotha;

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maladminiſtration. The emperors, were always ready to lend a willing ear to theſe complaints, as they furniſhed pretences to ſqueeze into their own coffers, the ſums, which rapacious governors had drawn from the people.—We have another inſtance of the ſame kind in Acts xxiv. 27.

25. The Romans commonly ſcourged malefactors, before they put them to death. Turpilius condemnatus, verberatuſque capite pœnas ſolvit. Sal. Bell. Jug.

29. The earlieſt Chriſtian writers ſay nothing of its being a crown of *thorns*; and from the word in the original (ακανθων) we may as well ſuppoſe it made of the plant, which Virgil calls the *mollis acanthus*. It is very probable indeed that the idea was rather of mockery, than of cruelty. Beating him with a reed ſeems not intended to hurt him; but only to ridicule his mock-authority.

29. It is evident, from this mode of mockery among the ſoldiers, how much the Roman pride was affected, by Jeſus's being called the *king of the Jews*. For tho Pilate had more ſenſe, than to be miſled by ſo ſilly a forgery; yet the chief prieſts knew well, what they were about, in throwing it out among the Roman ſoldiers.——After this idle accuſation had ſerved their purpoſe, they were unwilling to have the idea prevail; and therefore wiſhed Pilate to alter an inſcription which he had put up in deriſion. See John xix. 21.

32. It is ſuppoſed, that by the *croſs* here, is meant only the croſs-piece of wood, to which the criminal was nailed; and which he carried with him. See Matt. x. 38. This was called *furca*: and hence the word *furcifer*.

33. Golgotha, or Mount Calvary, both ſignifying the *place of a ſkull*, was a very little way out of the weſtern gate of Jeruſalem.

compelling one Simon, a Cyrenian, to aſſiſt him in bearing his croſs.

34. When he came to the place, after the fatigue he had undergone, they gave him, in the ſame ſpirit of mocking, a draught of vinegar
35. 36. 37. 38. and gall; which he juſt taſted. Having nailed him to the croſs, between two thieves; they fixed over his head an inſcription, *This is Jeſus, the king of the Jews:* and fulfilling a prophecy undeſignedly, by parting his garments among them, and caſting lots on his veſture, they ſat down, and watched him.

39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. Then began a cruel ſcene of mockery from thoſe who attended. *Thou that deſtroyeſt the temple,* they cried, *and buildeſt it in three days, ſave thyſelf. If thou be the ſon of God, come down from the croſs.* Even the chief prieſts, and elders, who attended the execution in perſon joined in theſe inhuman taunts: *He ſaved others; himſelf he cannot ſave.—If he be the king of Iſrael, let him now come down from the croſs, and we will believe him. He truſted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he ſaid I am the ſon of God.*——Even the very thieves, who were crucified with him, reviled him.

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34. Some ſuppoſe, it was an anodyne draught, which was often given to criminals; but from the hands which adminiſtered this, we are more readily led to a different ſuppoſition.

35. Crucifixion was eſteemed ſo dreadful among the Romans, that the word *cruciatus,* which expreſſes the moſt exquiſite torment, is derived from it.

35. Pſ. xxii. 18.

39. Not perhaps from ſuch of the common people as happened to be preſent, and were diſintereſted on the occaſion. They behaved, as deſcribed by St. Luke xxiii. 48. Being unable to do anything for him, in diſconſolate ſorrow, *they ſmote their breaſts and returned.* And yet ſome ſuppoſe, that the common people were, at this time, in general, alienated from Jeſus; as they found that all their expectations of his being a temporal leader were now vaniſhed: and to this opinion a paſſage in John (ii. 24) ſeems to give ſome countenance.—— But, I think on the whole, the other opinion has more the appearance of truth.

44. There is no great difficulty in reconciling this with St. Luke's account of the penitent thief. No liberty is more commonly taken in language, than that of putting ſingulars for plurals; and plurals for ſingulars.

This

This great cataſtrophe began about nine o'clock; and ſoon after 45.
a ſupernatural darkneſs overſhadowing the whole ſcene, continued
till the death of Jeſus. Six hours he hung upon the croſs in patient 46.
ſufferance. As nature was exhauſted he cried out, in a loud im-
paſſioned tone; *Eli, Eli, lama ſabachthani*, which ſignifies, *My God,*
my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? On this one of thoſe who ſtood 47. 48. 49.
by, dipping a ſponge in vinegar, and putting it at the end of a reed,
lifted it to his mouth: while others not underſtanding his words;
but ſuppoſing he called for Elias, cried out, Let him alone; let
us ſee whether Elias will come to ſave him.

Jeſus again crying with a loud voice, breathed out his ſoul. 50. 51. 52.
Immediately the veil of the temple ſeparated: all nature ſeemed con- 53.
vulſed: the earth trembled: the rocks rent, and many bodies of
ſaints aroſe, and appeared after his reſurrection in Jeruſalem. Aſto- 54.
niſhment, in the mean time, ſeized the guards; and the centurion,
who

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45. See Mark xv. 25.

45. This darkneſs is mentioned by the ancient Chriſtians, from Phlegon, and Thellus, as an eclipſe of the ſun. But as the moon was full at the paſſover, that could not be the caſe. The beſt interpretation is, that it was occaſioned by dark clouds drawn before the ſun.

46. This paſſage is the beginning of Pſalm 22d; in which is contained the moſt circumſtantial prophecy of the death of Chriſt. It is ſuppoſed therefore by ſome, that our Saviour by repeating the firſt verſe of this pſalm, made the application of the whole to himſelf.

50. The different evangeliſts expreſs the act of Chriſt's dying, by different words. St. Matthew's is the moſt remarkable, αφηκε το πνευμα, he *diſmiſſed his ſoul.* This is exactly ſuitable to his words in John x. 18.

51. Sandys, and Maundrel, both ſpeak of fiſſures in the rocks, which they had ſeen at Jeruſalem; and whi h are ſuppoſed to have been rent at this time. Nay we are told, that a deiſt lately travelling through Paleſtine, was converted by ſeeing one of them, (Fleming's Chriſtol. V. II. p. 97.) That theſe fiſſures which now exiſt were made in the rocks at the time of our Saviour's death, is matter of conjecture only: but that they have been made by ſome natural convulſion, is very evident from the correſpondent ſides of the chaſms.

54. This exclamation from a heathen ſoldier, is much of the ſame import with that, which Virgil puts in the mouth of Dido on ſeeing Æneas;

Credo equidem, (nec vana fides) genus eſſe deorum.

who attended, cried out in horror, Surely this perſon was the off-ſpring of ſome God.

55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. In the evening, Joſeph of Arimathea, a rich man, who had attended the miniſtry of Jeſus, having obtained Pilate's leave, piouſly took the body from the croſs; and wrapping it in fine linen laid it in a tomb, which he had hewn for himſelf in a rock. He then cloſed the mouth with a large ſtone, which had been fitted to it. ——This mournful ſolemnity was attended by Mary Magdalen and Mary the mother of James and Joſes; who with other women, had accompanied Jeſus from Galilee; and had been ſpectators, at a great diſtance, of the whole event.

62. 63. 64. The next morning, which was the day after the paſſover, the chief prieſts, and elders went to Pilate; and begged he would ſet a guard over the ſepulchre; For this impoſtor, ſaid they, in his life time, declared, that he would riſe again on the third day; and if his diſciples ſhould carry off the dead body in the night, and ſay he was riſen; it might occaſion greater miſchief, than any that had yet happened. 65. Pilate gave them leave to employ what means they pleaſed, and what ſoldiers they thought neceſſary. Having ſealed up the ſepulchre therefore with great care, they left it with full ſecurity under a ſufficient guard.

CHAP. XXVIII. 1. 2. 3. 4. Very early the next morning, which was the firſt day of the week, Mary Magdalen, and the other women, went to the ſepulchre, with an

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It is not improbable however, that this officer might before have heard much of Jeſus, and of his pretenſions: and might now be throughly converted by theſe grand events. If ſo, his exclamation ſhould receive a Chriſtian, rather than a heathen interpretation.

60. Burying criminals was not only allowed, but injoined by the Jewiſh law. Deut. xxi. 22.

1. There is conſiderable difficulty in reconciling the accounts of the ſeveral evangeliſts, with regard to the time, when the women came to the ſepulchre. For myſelf, I lay little ſtreſs on theſe unimportant variations. They who think the truth of Chriſtianity more concerned

an intention to imbalm the body. But to their great aſtoniſhment they found the ſepulchre laid open; rent, as it ſeemed, by an earthquake. An angel, illuminating the place with ſplendor, ſat upon the ſtone; and the guard, terrified into ſtupefaction, lay ſcattered about the ground like dead men.

Be not you afraid, ſaid the angel to the women: I know whom 5.
you ſeek—your crucified ſaviour. He is not here; but is riſen, as he 6.
himſelf foretold.——Look at the place where your Lord lay; and
go tell his diſciples the great event; and that he will meet them in 7.
Galilee.

They with fear, and great joy, departing, met Jeſus himſelf; 8.
and falling down at his feet, they worſhipped him. Be not afraid, 9.
ſaid he; continue your errand; and tell my brethren to meet me in 10.
Galilee.

In the mean time, the guard recovering from their terror, gave 11.
information to the chief prieſts of the whole tranſaction. The chief 12. 13. 14.
prieſts immediately called a council; and after much debating, en- 15.
gaged the ſoldiers by a promiſe of indemnity, and a large bribe, to
give out that the diſciples ſtole away the body, while they ſlept:
and this ſtrange ſtory was long propagated among the unbelieving
part of the Jewiſh nation.

While theſe things were tranſacting, the diſciples having received 16.
the commands of Jeſus, left Jeruſalem, and went into Galilee, to

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concerned in them, may find ſome ſatisfaction on this point, in Mr. Weſt's obſervations on the reſurrection; and perhaps more in Dr. Benſon's life of Chriſt.—One obſervation may be made here, that if the women had known, that the ſepulchre was ſealed, and guarded, they would probably have thought every attempt vain to imbalm the body. We muſt ſuppoſe therefore they knew nothing of that tranſaction.

13. The chief prieſts were not willing to bring the affair before Pilate; becauſe if he had diſmiſſed the ſoldiers with impunity, it would have brought great credit to the truth of the reſurrection. If the chief prieſts could have *proved any neglect*, there is no doubt, but they would have proſecuted the ſoldiers to the utmoſt.

meet

17. meet him on a mountain which he had appointed. There they saw him; and all their doubts being cleared away, they worshipped him; and received his last instructions.

18. 19. 20. All power, said Jesus, giving them his last charge, is intrusted to me, in heaven, and on earth. Go you therefore under my authority, and baptize all nations, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to obey all the precepts, which from time to time, I have given you: and tho I am now about to leave you, be assured, that you shall always be under my particular influence, and direction.

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17. I explain the latter part of this verse on the authority of Beza; who, instead of οἱ δὲ ἐδίσασαν, reads οὐδὲ ἐδίσασαν. It is certainly a good emendation: but I know not, on what authority it rests.—However if the reading stood, as in our translation, it is a difficulty of no great consequence.

END OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW.

PREFACE

TO

ST. MARK'S GOSPEL.

SOME writers ſuppoſe, there are two perſons mentioned in the New Teſtament of the name of Mark; and are at a loſs, which of them wrote the following goſpel. But Dr. Lardner, having examined all that is ſaid on the ſubject, gives it plainly as his opinion, that there was only one perſon of that name.

Another diſpute hath ariſen with regard to the originality of St. Mark's goſpel. Many ſuppoſe it to be only an epitome of St. Matthew. But there ſeems to be no good foundation for ſuch a ſuppoſition. It is true, this evangeliſt touches on few facts, which St. Matthew does not mention; and he generally treats them in St. Matthew's order. His account alſo of moſt of theſe facts is leſs detailed, than that of St. Matthew. But at the ſame time, it is obvious, that St. Mark dilates on ſome facts, which St. Matthew relates conciſely; and often adds circumſtances, which St. Matthew omits.——In the ſecond chapter, for inſtance, a number of circumſtances are recorded with regard to the paralytic, which are not mentioned by St. Matthew: in the eighth chapter, ſome circumſtances with regard to the miracle among the Gadarenes; and in the ninth, with regard to the transfiguration. In the twelfth, a much more circumſtantial account is given of the Scribe: and in the ſame chapter, the widow's mite is mentioned; which is totally omitted by

St. Matthew. It may be added, that in ſome trifling inſtances the two evangeliſts vary; as in the fifth chapter St. Mark ſpeaks of one demoniac; whereas St. Matthew mentions two. Several other little variations might be mentioned, which the reader may ſee collected in the ſeventh chapter of Dr. Lardner's account of the writers of the New Teſtament.——It is probable alſo, that if St. Mark had epitomized St. Matthew, he would not have left wholly untouched the circumſtances of the birth of Chriſt—the ſermon on the mount—and other particulars, which are ſo very remarkable in St. Matthew's goſpel.——The general opinion is, that this goſpel was reviſed by St. Peter, at Rome; and was written for the ſake of the chriſtians there, who had probably never ſeen any other goſpel.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

JOHN the baptiſt's appearance, 95——Jeſus baptized, 95——tempted in the wilderneſs, 96——begins to preach, 96——chooſes diſciples, 96——heals a demoniac, and Peter's mother-in-law, and other ſick perſons, 97——afterwards a paralytic; which gives great offence to the Phariſees, 98——calls Matthew, and eats with him; which gives new offence, 99——ſhews why he does not exact ſtrictneſs from his diſciples, 100——gives offence in paſſing through corn-fields, 100——and likewiſe by healing a withered hand on the ſabbath, 100——preaches from a boat, 101——chooſes twelve apoſtles, 101——The Phariſees aſcribe his miracles to the devil, 102——Jeſus prefers ſpiritual to temporal connections, 103——The parable of the ſower, 103——of the ſeed ſown; and of the grain of muſtard-ſeed, 105——Jeſus calms the ſea, 106——heals a demoniac at Gadara, 106——and a woman with a bloody flux, 107——raiſes Jairus's daughter from the dead, 108——ill-treated at Nazareth, 108——inſtructs, and

and ſends out the twelve apoſtles to preach, 109——Herod's opinion of Jeſus, 109——The circumſtances of John's death, 110——A multitude fed miraculouſly, 111——Jeſus ſtills a ſtorm; and performs many miracles at Geneſaret, 112——the Phariſees attack him on the account of traditions, 112——Jeſus explains to his diſciples the nature of pollution, 113——An eminent example of Gentile faith, 114——Jeſus reſtores a deaf, and dumb man, 114——again feeds a multitude miraculouſly, 115——An inſtance of Phariſaical obſtinacy, and impenitence; againſt which Jeſus warns his diſciples, 115——Jeſus heals a blind man at Bethſaida, 116——gives his diſciples a view of his ſufferings, 116——and rebukes Peter, 117——teaches the people that they muſt expect to ſuffer for the ſake of their religion, 117——he is transfigured, 117——heals a demoniac; and informs his diſciples why they could not perform ſuch a miracle, 119——injoins humility, and moderation, 120——queſtioned by the Phariſees about the matter of divorce, 121——bleſſes the children that are brought to him, 122——the danger of worldly-mindedneſs ſhewn in the ſtory of the perſon, who came to inquire after eternal life, 123——Jeſus again mentions his ſufferings, and reſurrection to his diſciples; and on ſome jealouſies, and ambitious views, that it raiſed among them, teaches them humility, and forbearance, 125——heals a blind man, 126——enters Jeruſalem, 126——inculcates faith from a barren fig-tree; and purges the temple, 128——The malice of the chief prieſts reproved by the parable of the labourers, hired into the vineyard, 129——The chief prieſts endeavour to inſnare Jeſus by a queſtion about paying tribute, 129——The Sadducees attempt it next by a queſtion about the reſurrection, 130——A Scribe queſtions him about the firſt commandment, 131——Jeſus queſtions the Scribes, and reproves them, 132——The widow's mite, 132——Jeſus's diſcourſe with his diſciples on the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and the laſt judgment, 133——The chief prieſts conſpire againſt Jeſus, 135——Simon's ſupper, 136——Judas betrays Jeſus, 137——The paſſover, and laſt ſupper, 137——Jeſus warns his diſciples of his approaching ſufferings, and cautions Peter, 138——his agony, 138——he is ſeized, 139——and carried before the high-prieſt, 139——Peter's denial, 141——Jeſus examined, and condemned by Pilate, 142——Circumſtances of his death, 143——and of his burial, 145——his reſurrection, and aſcenſion, 146.

St. MARK.

CHAP. I.

BEFORE the appearance of Jesus Christ, the prophecies of Malachi, and Isaiah were fulfilled in John the baptist: *Behold I send my messenger before thy face, to prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord: make his paths straight.* 1. 2. 3.

This holy man, austere, and mortified in the whole manner of his life, frequented the desert parts of Judea: and called men to repentance, as the only condition of forgiveness. 4. 5. 6.

Many attended him, not only from the country of Judea, but from Jerusalem; and confessing their sins, were baptized.

With great earnestness he admonished them, in the course of his preaching, not to mistake him for the Messiah; whose coming it was his business merely to declare. I, said he, baptize you only with water: but he shall baptize you with the holy spirit of God." 7. 8.

While John was thus preaching, and baptizing in the wilderness, Jesus himself came to him to be baptized: and on this occasion received a great, and full testimony from God of his divine mission. As he ascended from the water, the clouds opened; and a glorious 9. 10. 11.

2. Mal. iii. 1. 3. Isa. xi. 3.

light

light ſpreading round him, a divine voice was heard, " Thou art " my beloved ſon, in whom I am well pleaſed."

12. 13. After his baptiſm, Jeſus was led, by an impulſe of the ſpirit of God, into a deſolate, and ſolitary country; where he continued forty days in faſting, prayer, and temptation; while angels miniſtred unto him.

14. 15. On the impriſonment of John, he went into Galilee; and there began to preach the goſpel; declaring, that the eſtabliſhment of the Meſſiah's kingdom, which had ſo long been foretold by the prophets, was now about to take place: and exhorting men to believe, and accept, by repentance, and a change of heart, the gracious offers it made of ſalvation.

16. 17. 18. 19. 20. At the time, when Jeſus began to preach, he began alſo to chuſe diſciples. Sincere people, among the lower ranks, were the objects of his choice. As he walked along the ſhores of the lake of Geneſareth, he found two fiſhermen, Simon, and Andrew, whom he called; and alluding to their employment, told them, they ſhould become fiſhers of men. Soon after, he called two other fiſhermen, James and John, the ſons of Zebedee. All four leaving their buſineſs, and relations, immediately followed him.

21. 22. Accompanied by theſe attendants, he went to Capernaum, and taught in the ſynagogue on the ſabbath. His divine diſcourſe ſtruck all, who heard him, with aſtoniſhment: for they eaſily perceived, that the doctrines he conveyed, and the authority, with which he inforced them, were very different from the cold interpretations, and gloſſes of the ſcribes.

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20. It is probable, from St. John's account, they had been before convinced by his miracles, and doctrine.

It

It happened, as he was teaching in the ſynagogue, there was a man poſſeſſed with an evil ſpirit; who cried out at the ſight of him, acknowledging his divine power; and dreading the effects of it. Jeſus having commanded the wicked ſpirit to leave him, the man, on ſuffering a violent convulſion, was perfectly reſtored. This great miracle had it's proper effect on the multitude, who conſidered it as a confirmation of his doctrine; and ſpread his fame through the country. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28.

From the ſynagogue Jeſus retired with his diſciples to the houſe of Simon, whoſe mother-in-law they found lying ill of a fever. Jeſus immediately healing her, ſhe was able to attend them at ſupper. 29. 30. 31.

Theſe miracles drew multitudes of people about him in the evening; inſomuch, that the whole city, in a manner, was gathered before the door, bringing with them many who laboured under bodily diſorders; and many, who were poſſeſſed with evil ſpirits; all of whom experienced the gracious effects of his almighty power. Nor would he ſuffer the evil ſpirits, tho they knew him, to make him known. Such teſtimony he abhorred. 32. 33. 34.

The next morning, riſing before it was light, he retired to a ſecret place, to enjoy contemplation, and prayer. But his diſciples, ſoon after, following, told him, how impatiently the people expected his return. Jeſus however informing them, that he muſt not con- 35. 36. 37. 38. 39.

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24. Better tranſlated, *What haſt thou to do with us?*

34. *Such teſtimony he abhorred.* There are different interpretations of this paſſage. Some ſuppoſe, that Jeſus forbad them to ſpeak, on the ſame principle, on which he forbad the perſon he had healed, to diſcover him; either as giving an example of modeſty, or as preventing diſcovery. But to me it appears more conſiſtent with the Meſſiah's character to abhor the teſtimony of wicked ſpirits, from the impropriety of the thing itſelf. Prophecy, miracles, and the purity of his doctrine were the proofs on which he reſted his authority.

fine his labours to any one place, took a circuit round Galilee; preaching the gospel, and confirming the truth of it by miracles.

40. Among other objects of his compassion it happened, that a leper came to him, and kneeling down, begged, he would shew that divine power on him, which he had shewn on many others.
41. 42. 43. 44. Jesus healing him with a touch, ordered him to keep the matter private—to present himself to the priest, who was the proper judge
45. of his cure—and to offer what Moses commanded. But the man, in a transport of joy, and gratitude, on finding himself so suddenly healed, took great pains in publishing the matter. Such crouds therefore resorted to Jesus in all the great towns, that he was obliged to retire to solitary places; where such only, as were under the influence of higher motives, than curiosity, attended him.

CHAP. II.

1. 2. Some days after, he returned to Capernaum. This was presently known; and numbers of people came to him; whom, as usual, he instructed.

3. While the people thus crouded around him, it happened, that a paralytic was brought to be healed. As the men, who carried
4. him, could not easily get at Jesus through the croud, they went round the house, and finding access to the roof, they opened a private door, and let down the sick man, together with his couch, into the room before Jesus. Jesus seeing such an instance of faith,
5. told the sick man his sins were forgiven.

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44. See a note on Matt. viii. 4.

4. The eastern houses were flat at the top; where was commonly a door, which communicated with the inside of the house. Often there was a ladder, or stairs on the outside, which must have been the case with the house described Mark xiii. 15. The door may be supposed to be fastened; and the word εξορυξαντες may signify, they *burst it open*. Dr. Shaw supposes, from the form of the Barbary houses, that Jesus was teaching in a court yard; and that the sick man was brought within the gate; carried up stairs; and let down from the roof to that part of the yard, which was nearest to him.

5. See a note on Matt. ix. 2.

In

In the room, at that time, were ſitting ſeveral of the Scribes, 6. 7.
who did not care to ſpeak openly; but in their hearts had great
indignation, at what they eſteemed ſo blaſphemous a ſpeech. Jeſus 8. 9. 10. 11. 12.
knowing their thoughts, aſked them, Whether it was eaſier to
forgive the man's ſins, or to heal his diſeaſe? But that you may
be aſſured, ſaid he, I can do the firſt, you ſhall ſee me per-
form the ſecond. On this, with a word ſpeaking, he healed
the man ſo perfectly, that inſtead of being carried on his bed, he
roſe up, and carried it away himſelf; to the great aſtoniſhment of
all preſent, who glorified God, declaring, that Jeſus was ſuch a
prophet, as had not yet appeared.

From this ſtraitened place, Jeſus led the multitude to an open 13.
ſituation by the ſide of the lake; and there preached the goſpel to
them.

After he had ſent them away, he paſſed by one of the tax- 14.
gatherers booths, which belonged to Matthew, the ſon of Alpheus;
who, on Jeſus's calling him, left his gainful employment, and
followed without delay.

From hence Jeſus went to the houſe of his new diſciple; where 15.
he ſat down at table with many of Matthew's former acquaintance;
people of looſe morals, and ordinary reputation. The Scribes, and 16.
Phariſees, obſerving this, inquired of his diſciples, Why their maſter
demeaned himſelf by conſorting with ſuch diſreputable people?

Jeſus aſked them, Whether the healthy or the ſick had more 17.
need of a phyſician? and added, that his errand in this world, was,
to apply himſelf rather to the ſinner, than to the righteous.

On an occaſion of the ſame kind the diſciples of John the Baptiſt, 18.
and of the Phariſees, came to him, expreſſing their wonder, that
he bred up his followers with ſo little auſterity.

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14. He too, it is probable, as the other diſciples, had been before convinced by the doctrine, and miracles of Jeſus.

19. 20. I conſider my diſciples, ſaid Jeſus, like the friends of the bride-groom at a marriage. They mix in the indulgences of the marriage-feaſt; but never ſuppoſe theſe indulgences are to laſt
21. 22. through life. Worldly habits muſt be broken by degrees. I cannot expect my diſciples to break theirs at once. A new patch ſuits ill with an old garment: and new wine with old veſſels.

23. Sometime after, as Jeſus was walking, on the ſabbath-day, through the corn-fields, his diſciples, being hungry, plucked the ears of corn, and rubbing them in their hands, began to eat. It
24. happened, that ſome of the Phariſees ſaw the action; and taking great offence at ſuch a profanation of the ſabbath, mentioned it to Jeſus.

25. Is not the example of David, anſwered Jeſus, ſufficient to convince you, that in caſes of neceſſity a liberty may be taken with a
26. poſitive inſtitution? David went into the houſe of God, you are informed, and not only eat the ſhew-bread himſelf; but diſtributed it alſo among his followers; tho the law ordains, that it ſhould
27. be eaten only by the prieſts. The ſabbath therefore was made for man, not man for the ſabbath. And if David's example is not
28. ſufficient to convince you; know further, that the ſon of man is Lord of the ſabbath.

CHAP. III.

1. 2. On another ſabbath, as Jeſus was in a ſynagogue, a man happened to be there with a withered hand; which ſome of the Phariſees obſerving, were on the watch, whether he would heal him. Jeſus

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22. See a note with regard to the manner, in which the ancients preſerved wine, Matt. ix. 17.

26. Abiathar was not high-prieſt at that time, ſee 1 Sam. xxi. 1. But επι Αβιαθαρ may ſignify, (as ſometimes in the beſt Greek writers) *Abiathar putting him upon it.* We read afterwards in Samuel how much Abiathar, *who was afterwards high-prieſt,* was *then* in David's intereſt.

knowing

knowing their thoughts, called the man forth into the middle of the congregation; and then turning to the Pharisees, asked them, Whether they thought the sabbath was better observed by doing a good action; or by meditating a wicked one? 3. 4.

This obliging them either to deny a plain truth, or to condemn themselves: they held their peace.

Jesus moved with displeasure, and grief at such an instance of obstinacy, and hardness of heart, ordered the man to stretch out his hand; which he did, and instantly found it restored. 5.

The Pharisees abashed, beyond the power of reply, left the synagogue; and plotted in secret, with the Herodians, how they might destroy him. 6

Jesus, in the mean time, retired to the side of the lake; where many people, from the coasts near Tyre, and Sidon on one side; and from Judea on the other, resorted to him; bringing with them, as usual, such as were possessed, and diseased. He healed their several infirmities, and injoined silence on the evil spirits. But being crouded, and pressed by the people; and not able to speak to them commodiously, he got into a boat, and preached to them from thence. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12.

Jesus, about this time, calling a number of his particular followers to him, chose twelve, whom he meant to be the witnesses of his actions; and his assistants in preaching the gospel. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21.

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19. Dr. Clark says, he carried them home with him to his own house; and tells us, it is plain from Matt. iv. 13, that *Jesus had a house of his own.*——I think it rather appears from Jesus's own account, that *he had not where to lay his head.*——Besides, I am not fond, at any rate, of entering into these particulars. If Jesus had a house of his own, it leads to many low, and trivial enquiries; Whether he kept servants? How that house was furnished? &c. which introduce low, domestic ideas; and tend rather to depreciate the dignity of that great character. *Obscurity* is often one of the great sources of the *sublime*; and an investigation of *circumstances* leads to *littleness*.

In:

In consequence of this appointment, he gave them power to heal diseases, and to cast out evil spirits. Their names were Simon, whom he called Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alpheus, Jude, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot.

With these twelve Jesus returned to Capernaum, where the multitude, as usual, prevented his taking even the common refreshments of nature; at which his friends were not a little uneasy, fearing he might faint.

22. In the mean time, a body of Scribes, who came from Jerusalem, endeavoured to destroy the force of his miracles by ascribing them to the devil.

23. Jesus asked them, how they thought it possible, that the devil
24. 25. 26. should conspire against himself? His kingdom, in that case, he told them, like a house, or government divided against itself,
27. must inevitably perish. When you see the goods of a strong man, said he, destroyed, you naturally conclude, that he, who destroyed them, was still stronger. How is it then, that you do not, with the same readiness, suppose, when you see the devil dispossessed,
28. 29. 30. that he who dispossesses him, has superior power? To ascribe therefore to the devil, said Jesus, these miracles, so evidently

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21. Dr. Whitby has shewn, in several instances, that the word εξεστη has often this meaning. And as it comes immediately after we are told, that Jesus *could not so much as eat bread*, it appears, as if there was a connection between the two expressions.——On the other hand, εξεστη is certainly capable of receiving the sense given in our translation: and in this sense, it seems connected with the words, which follow. His friends said *he was beside himself*; but the Pharisees said still worse, *that he had a devil*.——Bp. Pearce gives a third sense. He translates *lay hold* into *keep off*; and *him* into *it*; which the words, he says, will easily bear. The sense then is, *His friends seeing the multitude press on him, went out to keep them off*.—This I think is rather forced.——Bowyer conjectures that ελεγον does not imply what *his friends said*: but what *they said*, or what was commonly reported: but I cannot see the connection of this alteration.——On the whole, I prefer Dr. Whitby's interpretation.

wrought

wrought by the finger of God, is among thoſe ſins, which are the moſt difficult to repent of, and of courſe the moſt difficult to be forgiven.

On an occaſion, which happened about this time, Jeſus ſhewed, 31. 32.
in how inconſiderable a light he conſidered all earthly connections, in compariſon of thoſe formed by piety, and religion. As the croud preſſed around him, his mother, and other relations deſired to ſpeak with him; which was ſignified to him by the people, who ſat near. Jeſus turning round to his diſciples, and to thoſe, who ſeemed the moſt attentive, told them, that no earthly relationſhip had any weight with him, compared with that heavenly attachment, which was formed by ſouls united to him by doing the will of God.

CHAP. IV.

Some time after, Jeſus retiring again to the ſide of the lake, and 1.
the multitude crouding upon him, he got into a boat, and preached to them from thence. The truths he taught them were delivered 2.
in parables; among which the moſt remarkable was that of the ſower.

As a huſbandman, ſaid he, was ſowing his ſeed, ſome of the 3. 4.
grain fell upon the beaten path; and were picked up by the birds. Some again fell on rocky ground, covered ſlightly with earth, and 5. 6.
ſoon ſprang up; but as the ſun grew hot, they were immediately ſcorched for want of ſoil. Other grain fell among weeds; which 7.
grew up with them, and preſently choaked them. But ſome 8.
finding a good ſoil, properly prepared to receive them, produced fruit in great abundance.—This parable Jeſus recommended very 9.
particularly to the attention of the people.

Afterwards, when he was alone with his diſciples, they deſired 10.
him to explain it.

To

11. 12. To you, anſwered Jeſus, the truths of the goſpel may be plainly delivered: but to the prejudiced multitude I ſpeak in parables; that they may be, as it were, their own inſtructors: for in them is fulfilled the prophet's denunciation, *This people hear indeed, but underſtand not; they ſee, but perceive not; ſo as to be converted, and*
13. *ſaved.*—The parable however, ſaid Jeſus, is ſo eaſy, as to want
14. 15. little explanation. The huſbandman is the preacher of the goſpel—and the different kinds of ground, repreſent the various diſpoſitions of thoſe, who receive it. The beaten path ſignifies thoſe, on whoſe
16. 17. hardened hearts the goſpel makes no impreſſion. The ſhallow ſoil, on which the ſeed was ſcorched, exhibits ſuch as liſten to the goſpel at firſt with apparent joy; but as ſoon as the heat of per-
18. 19. ſecution ariſes, their religion dies away. Again, the weedy ſoil, in which the ſeed was choaked, is an emblem of thoſe, who vainly endeavour to divide their affections between the goſpel, and the world. The conſequence is, that the cares, and pleaſures of life
20. generally in the end ſtifle the efforts of religion. Laſtly, the good ground repreſents thoſe, who receive the goſpel in the honeſty, and
21. ſincerity of their hearts; and live according to its rules.—It will be your parts hereafter, added Jeſus, to manifeſt all theſe truths
22. to the world. Tho, at preſent, the undiſcerning multitude cannot underſtand them; they are all intended for the future inſtruction of
23. mankind. Pay a juſt attention therefore to what you hear; and
24. be aſſured, that the more faithfully you diſtribute the word of truth to others, you ſhall receive it in the larger proportion your-
25. ſelves. It is a treaſure, which, in the hands of thoſe, who poſſeſs it in abundance, ſhall continually increaſe: while they, who hold it but in ſcanty meaſure, may ſoon loſe the little they poſſeſs.

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12. Iſa. vi. 9. See a note on Matt. xiii. 15.

To

To the parable of the ſower, Jeſus added other parables in his 26. 27. 28. 29.
diſcourſes to the people. Particularly he ſhewed the progreſs of the goſpel under the following illuſtration.

The huſbandman, ſaid he, caſteth his ſeed into the ground. He ſleepeth, and riſeth; and purſueth his ordinary buſineſs. The ſeed unobſerved continues growing on; till it hath attained, by imperceptible degrees, its full maturity. Then cometh the harveſt, when it is cut down, and gathered into the barn.—For the goſpel, 30. 31. 32.
added he, reſembles a grain of muſtard-ſeed; which is remarkable for being the leaſt of all ſeeds, when ſown; and the greateſt of all plants, when grown up.

In this manner Jeſus inſtructed the people in parables, opening 33. 34.
the truth by degrees to thoſe, who were too much prejudiced to hear it at once; and throwing out repreſentations of future times, which might hereafter confirm the chriſtian in his faith. Every thing however, he explained in private to his diſciples.

As the evening drew on, Jeſus diſmiſſed the multitude; and 35. 36.
taking his diſciples with him, fatigued as he was, got into a boat, which was preparing with ſeveral other little veſſels, to paſs the lake.

In the midſt of the paſſage a violent ſtorm aroſe, and the lake 37.
was ſo agitated, that they ſeemed in great danger. Jeſus himſelf 38. 39.

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27. Και καθευδη, και εγειρηται, νυκτα, και ημεραν. *He ſleepeth, and riſeth,* (in perfect ſecurity, and at his eaſe, according to the ſeaſon) *night and day*—that is, he does not concern himſelf any farther about the corn, after it is ſown; knowing that nature will do all that is requiſite. Dormio, in latin, has this ſenſe.————Our Saviour was the great ſower of the ſeed: which afterwards, under the apoſtles, ſprang up into ſo rich a harveſt.—And thus the preſent miniſters of the goſpel often, it may be hoped, ſow ſeed, which may afterwards grow up; tho it do not immediately appear.

36. Bowyer reads it otherwiſe. He places a full ſtop after αυτον; which makes the ſenſe thus. *They take him.* (i. e. with them.) *When he was in the ſhip, and other ſhips with them, there aroſe,* &c.

was asleep; but being soon awakened by the terrified disciples, he rebuked the wind, and the sea, saying, Peace, be still. It was instantly calm: and Jesus then chid their vain fears, and want of
40. 41. faith; while they without excuse, could only express their astonishment in exclamations to each other.

CHAP. V.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. Jesus having landed on the coast of Gadara, was met by a demoniac. This unhappy man, since the time of his possession, had wandered, day and night, among the tombs; which were his only habitation; howling, and cutting himself with stones. The neighbourhood, to which he was a great annoyance, had endeavoured to bind, and secure him: but such was his amazing strength, that chains had been ineffectual.

6. This person, fierce as he was, on seeing Jesus, ran towards him
7. 8. 9. 10. with marks of respect, and submission; calling him by his name; giving him the title of the son of God; and beseeching him not to torment him; and drive him out of the country.

Jesus, ordering the evil spirit to leave the man, asked his name? He was answered, that no name could suit so numerous a possession, but that of Legion.

11. It happened that near the place, a great herd of swine was
12. feeding; into which the evil spirits besought Jesus, that he would
13. suffer them to enter. On receiving permission, the whole herd, which consisted of about two thousand, rushed down a precipice into the lake, and were drowned.

14. 15. The keepers of the swine presently spread abroad this great event; and people from all parts came crouding to the lake; where they
16. saw the demoniac sitting, perfectly restored; and heard on the

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5. The Jewish tombs were artificial caverns cut in rocks. See Mark xv. 46.

7. Better translated, *What hast thou to do with me?*

13. See remarks on this miracle Matt. viii. 32.

spot

ſpot the circumſtances of the whole affair: but ſtruck with fear, 17.
they deſired Jeſus to leave the country. He ſeeing the time of 18. 19. 20.
their converſion not yet come, prepared to depart. The demoniac
deſired to accompany him, but Jeſus left him behind as a witneſs
of the greatneſs of the miracle, which he had performed.

Jeſus had ſcarce arrived at the other ſide of the lake, when the 21.
multitude flocked together again to receive him.

Among them a perſon of ſuperior dignity, a ruler of the ſyna-
gogue, whoſe name was Jairus, came forward; and falling down 22. 23.
at the feet of Jeſus, beſought him to heal his daughter, who lay
at the point of death. Jeſus immediately went with him; followed,
as uſual, by a great multitude. 24.

As the croud preſſed upon him, a woman, taking the advantage
of it, came behind him, and privately touched his garment. She 25. 26. 27. 28. 29.
had been afflicted twelve years with a bloody flux, which had
been deemed incurable: but hearing of the fame of Jeſus, ſhe was
fully perſuaded, that even this touch would be ſufficient to effect
her cure. She found it ſo, and was inſtantly healed.—But Jeſus,
knowing the fact, and not chuſing, that ſuch an inſtance of faith 30.
ſhould paſs unobſerved, turned round, and aſked his diſciples, who
had touched him? They ſeemed to wonder at the queſtion, as the
multitude was preſſing him in every part. But as Jeſus continued to 31.
look round, the woman finding ſhe could not paſs undiſcovered, fell 32.
down before him, and confeſſed the truth. Jeſus bidding her not 33.
be afraid, commended her faith; and ſent her away with an aſſu- 34.
rance, that her malady ſhould not return.

During this interruption, a meſſenger met Jairus, informing him,
that his daughter was dead; and that it was needleſs to trouble 35.

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17. See a note on the parallel place in Matt. viii. 34.

19. See a note on Matt. xiv. 34.

36. 37. 38. 39. 40. Jesus any further. Jesus turning to the afflicted parent, bad him only believe, and he should see the power of God.

When they came to the house, Jesus told the mourners, who had begun their customary lamentations, that their grief was unnecessary; for the young woman was only asleep. At this they were ready to deride him, knowing she was dead. But he, removing all from the chamber, except three of his disciples, Peter, James, 41. and John; and the father and mother of the young woman, took 42. her by the hand, and bad her rise: on which she not only returned 43. to life; but instantly recovered her health, and strength. Jesus ordered, that something should be given her to eat; and forbad her parents to divulge the matter.

CHAP. VI.

1. Soon after, Jesus leaving Capernaum, went to Nazareth, where 2. 3. he had spent his youth: and going into the synagogue on the sabbath-day, he taught the people, as he had done in other places. At first, they were astonished at the wisdom, and power, with which he spake: but their prejudices soon overcoming their candor, they took great offence. Is not this, they cried, the carpenter? And are not all his mean relations among us? Whence came he by such wisdom, and authority?

4. 5. 6. Jesus grieved at the prejudices of these unhappy people, who thus withstood their true interest, told them, It was no new indignity for a prophet to be discredited in his own country: and finding them at present, in no disposition to receive the gospel, he wrought only a few miracles on those, whose faith made them proper objects of his power; and leaving Nazareth, went to preach in other parts of the country.

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38. See a note on Matt. ix. 23.

43. See a note on Matt. viii. 4.

At

At the ſame time he ſent the twelve apoſtles to preach 7.
in different places; giving them power to confirm their doctrine
by miracles. Make no preparation, ſaid he, of ſuperfluous things 8. 9.
for your journey. Where you are kindly received in any town, 10.
there remain, till you leave it: and where you are perſecuted, 11.
leave your perſecutors to the judgment of God. You have done all
that is required: and they have to anſwer for the ſin of reſiſting ſuch
means of conviction, as Sodom, and Gomorrha never had.

With theſe inſtructions the apoſtles departed, and found them- 12, 13.
ſelves enabled both to preach the goſpel, and to confirm the truth
of it by miracles.

The fame of Jeſus was, by this time, ſpread through the country; 14. 15. 16.
and various were the opinions of men about him. Some thought
him Elias—others thought him one of the old prophets ariſen from
the dead—and many conceived, that if he were not one of the old
prophets, he was at leaſt a prophet equal to them. But the
opinion of Herod was the moſt ſingular. He had juſt put John
the baptiſt to death; and in the agitation of a guilty conſcience,
cried out; This is certainly that righteous man, whom I beheaded;
who is riſen again; and enabled to perform theſe mighty works.

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13. In the original it is ſaid, they *anointed with oil many that were ſick:* and the ſame expreſſion is uſed by St. James (v. 14.) In theſe paſſages the papiſts find their ſacrament of *extreme unction.*——But how? Our Saviour often uſed an external action in working a miracle; but it was never conceived, that the virtue lay in the external action;—nor that the external action, independent of the power, was of any value. They may juſt as well ſay that making clay is a ſacrament, becauſe Jeſus cured the eyes of a blind man with it.—Among the ancients, *unction* was thought a good remedy in many caſes. Celſus recommends it: *Ungi corpus in acutis, et recentibus oportet.* De Med. ii. 14. Galen alſo obſerves, that *Unctiones adverſus vim febrium auxilium eſſe* (Com. 4 in Hippoc.) The apoſtles therefore might uſe a common external action in effecting a miraculous cure. The action could not depreciate the miracle, as the cure was inſtant: and, in the mean time, this obvious leſſon was inculcated, that we ought to uſe the means, which God Almighty hath put in our power; and truſt him with the event, who can only render them effectual.

The

17. 18. 19. 20. The circumſtances of John's death were theſe.

Herod had long had a great veneration for him; and had, on many occaſions, ſhewn a deference to his advice. But on one occaſion he took great offence. He lived at that time in a ſtate of inceſt with Herodias, his brother Philip's wife: for which John, with great freedom, had reproved him. This immediately drew on John the reſentment of Herodias; through whoſe inſtigation Herod impriſoned him; but could not be prevailed on to put him
21. to death. It happened however, at a great feaſt, which Herod had
22. 23. made on his birth-day, that the daughter of Herodias, dancing before the king, pleaſed him ſo much, that in his gaiety, he promiſed, with an oath, to grant any requeſt, ſhe ſhould make.
24. 25. Being inſtructed by her mother, ſhe demanded the head of John
26. the baptiſt. The king was mortified at the requeſt; but for the ſake of an oath taken in ſo public a manner, he granted what ſhe
27. 28. aſked. An executioner was ſent to behead John; and the head
29. was given to the daughter, who carried it to her mother.—The diſciples of John afterwards obtained leave to bury the corpſe.

30. The twelve apoſtles, in the mean time, returning to Jeſus from their ſeveral miſſions, gave him an account of the miracles they had wrought; and of the ſucceſs of their miniſtry.

31. 32. They were then in a place of much reſort; and Jeſus wiſhing to be a little more private; went with them into a boat, intending
33. 34. 35. 36. to land in a retired place. But the people, obſerving from the ſhore the courſe of the boat, purſued it from all parts; ſo that on his landing, he found a great multitude aſſembled. He was moved therefore with compaſſion at a croud, who appeared, he ſaid, like ſheep without a ſhepherd: and tho he was hungry and fatigued, and had retired to that lonely place merely for refreſh-

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21. *A convenient day* is a bad tranſlation: it ſhould be a *feſtive*, or *rejoicing day*.

ment,

ment, he began again the toil of inſtructing them, which he continued to a late hour.

The diſciples however reminded him, as the evening drew on, of the inconveniences that might enſue on keeping the people faſting ſo long in that deſolate country.

Do you then, ſaid Jeſus, give them proviſions. 37.

That appeared impoſſible.

On this Jeſus aſked, what quantity of proviſion they had? 38.

They anſwered, only five loaves, and two ſmall fiſhes.

He then ordered his diſciples to ſeparate the people, and make 39. 40.
them ſit down in companies, of about fifty, or a hundred together. 41.
When they were all thus diſpoſed, he took the bread, and fiſh; and giving thanks, diſtributed them, through the hands of his diſciples, among the multitude. And tho there were about five 42. 43. 44.
thouſand people; yet they were not only fully ſatisfied; but left behind them fragments, which filled twelve baſkets.

He then bad his diſciples get into a boat, and paſs over to 45.
Bethſaida, a town at the north end of the lake; and leave him to 46.
diſmiſs the people: which having done, he retired awhile to enjoy, in ſolitude, contemplation, and prayer.

In the mean time, night advancing, and the wind being boiſte- 47, 48.
rous, and contrary, Jeſus ſaw from the ſhore the diſciples in difficulty, and danger; and went to them walking on the ſurface 49. 50.
of the lake. They ſuppoſing him to be a ſpirit, cried out with fear; till they knew his voice, bidding them not be afraid. 52. 51.
As ſoon as he entered the boat, the wind ceaſed: while they,

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40. The word *companies* expreſſes the original perhaps better then *ranks*.——Some ſuppoſe they ſat down in companies, which contained an hundred; and that there were fifty of theſe companies: ſo that the whole multitude might eaſily be counted, according to the text, by hundreds, and by fifties. Fifty times an hundred makes five thouſand.

48. See a note on Matt. xiv. 15.

forgetting

forgetting the miracle of the loaves, were as much aſtoniſhed, as if they had been totally unacquainted with his power.

53. They ſoon after landed in the country of Geneſareth; where Jeſus
54. 55. 56. being preſently known, great crouds from all the towns, and villages in the neighbourhood, came to him, bringing ſick people; whom they laid down in roads, and ſtreets, wherever he paſſed, deſiring only to touch his cloaths. Such inſtances of faith never paſſed unrewarded.

CHAP. VII.

1. 2. 3. 4. In the mean time, the fame of Jeſus, thus every where increaſing, gave great offence to the leading doctors of the law; and a body of them came from Jeruſalem, on purpoſe to watch, and find out ſome pretence againſt him. His neglect of traditions afforded the beſt.—The tradition particularly, which injoined the waſhing of hands before a meal, or after having been in mixed company, was religiouſly obſerved by the Phariſees, as a point of ſanctity, beyond what the law required; and tended, among other exactneſſes of the ſame kind, to gain them reverence with the people.

5. They came therefore to Jeſus, and publicly reproved him for bringing up his diſciples in a thorough neglect of this, among other holy obſervances.

6. 7. But Jeſus bad them remember, what the prophet Iſaias had ſaid of their fathers; which might be conſidered likewiſe as prophetic of them: *This people honoureth me with their lips; while their hearts are far from me. But in vain do they worſhip me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

8. 9. Do not you, ſaid Jeſus, in the moſt flagrant manner, ſet up your own traditions againſt the commandments of God? You know,

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3. See a note on Matt. xv. 2.

6. It is not clear, whether the prophet does not ſpeak here *directly* of the times of the Meſſiah.

9. *Full well ye reject.* Καλως αθετειτε. Ye totally reject.

how

how ſtrictly the law injoins honouring your parents, for inſtance, 10.
which is a duty inforced even by the penalty of death. But your 11. 12. 13.
tradition gives the people to underſtand, that if, inſtead of aſſiſting their parents, they put their money into the treaſury of the temple, it is more acceptable to God; thus making the commandment of no effect. Many other things of a ſimilar nature might be mentioned.

Then turning from the Phariſees to the people, Jeſus told them, 14.
it was his buſineſs to give them juſter notions of pollution, than any they received from Phariſaical traditions. No external un- 15.
cleanneſs, ſaid he, pollutes a man. It is what ariſes from his heart, that becomes his great pollution; and to which you ought 16.
all particularly to attend.

Then leaving the multitude, he retired into a houſe; where 17.
the diſciples deſired him to explain to them what he had ſaid to the people about pollution.

Jeſus expreſſing his ſurprize at their wanting information on ſo 18. 19. 20.
eaſy a ſubject, ſhewed them how impoſſible it was that any *moral* 21. 22. 23.
ſtain ſhould ariſe from *external* pollution; becauſe it had no connection with the heart. But bad thoughts, ſaid he, and every kind of wickedneſs, which have a connection with *it*, effectually pollute a man.

From Genneſareth Jeſus removed to the borders of Tyre, and 24.
Sidon, where he went privately into a houſe, and wiſhed for a while

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11. The word *Corban* ſignified any ſacred offering: and the Jews adopted the word into a vow. As, for inſtance, a man would ſay to his parent, *It is Corbon, whatever advantage you might receive of me:* it then became ſacrilege to apply that thing to private uſe. Joſephus tells us (Antiq. Jud. lib. IV. cap. 4.) the prieſts could abſolve from this vow; for which they required a fee of fifty ſhekels.

17. The difficulty with the diſciples probably was ſome confuſion between legal, or ceremonial uncleanneſs, and that of the heart.

25. 26. to be concealed from the people. But it was impoſſible. A heathen woman of that country having heard of his being there, came to him, begging his aſſiſtance to cure her daughter, who was an un-
27. happy demoniac. Jeſus, deſirous to exhibit an inſtance of Gentile faith, told her, he was not ſent to the heathen, but to the Jews. It is not right ſaid he, to take the children's bread, and caſt it to
28. dogs. She, applying the figure to her own caſe, anſwered; True, Lord; but the dogs under the table may, without offence, eat
29. 30. the children's offalls.—An anſwer, ſo full of faith, and knowledge, drew a high commendation from Jeſus; and an aſſurance, that ſhe ſhould find (as ſhe did) her daughter perfectly recovered.

31. From the borders of Tyre, and Sidon, Jeſus's next journey, was, through the country of Decapolis, to the lake of Tiberias.

32. As the multitude gathered round him, a man deaf and dumb
33. was brought to him to be reſtored. Jeſus, taking him a little
34. aſide, touched his ears, and mouth; and looking up to heaven,
35. 36. cried out *Ephphatha, Be opened*; on which an inſtant cure was effected. Jeſus bringing the man to the people, forbad them to publiſh the matter abroad.—This prohibition however, was but ill-obſerved: for they were above meaſure aſtoniſhed; and ſeemed more ſtruck with this miracle, than with any they had yet ſeen.

CHAP. VIII.

1. 2. 3. The multitude having now been with Jeſus three days; and having ſpent all their proviſion, he called his diſciples to him, and told

27. See Matthew xv. 26.

33. The text ſays, *He ſpit, and touched his tongue.* This action is mentioned in two other places, Mark viii. 23; and John ix. 6. It has to us an indelicate appearance: but we muſt not criticiſe the manners, which prevailed two thouſand years ago, by thoſe of our own age. Our Saviour often uſed ſome *outward ſign*; why *this* was choſen, it is impoſſible for us to know.

36. See a note on Matt. viii. 4.

2. Theſe three days, according to the Jewiſh mode of reckoning, might be only two nights, and one day. Nor need we ſuppoſe, that all the multitude ſtaid even that time; but were continually

told them he was unwilling to ſend the people away faſting, as many of them came from a great diſtance; and might ſuffer through hunger. The diſciples not conſidering the miracle he had ſo lately wrought, immediately mentioned again the difficulty of feeding ſuch a number in ſo deſolate a place. But Jeſus finding they had ſeven loaves, and a few ſmall fiſhes, ordered the people to ſit down; and giving thanks, he diſtributed the proviſion among them. After they were all ſatisfied, tho they conſiſted of at leaſt four thouſand, as much offal remained, as filled ſeven baſkets. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

Jeſus then diſmiſſing them, took boat, and landed on the coaſt of Dalmanutha.

At this place a body of Phariſees, came to him; and expreſſing themſelves diſſatisfied with the miracles he had yet wrought, which ſhewed his power only over *earthly things*; demanded the evidence of a *ſign from heaven*. 11.

Jeſus grieved at their obſtinacy and malice, refuſed to gratify their curioſity; and leaving them, took boat again, and repaſſed the lake. 12. 13.

It happened, that the diſciples having forgotten to take with them a ſufficient ſupply of bread, were communicating the neglect to each other; when Jeſus bad them beware of *the leaven of the Phariſees, and of the Herodians*. 14. 15.

Struck with the word *leaven*, they immediately conceived, that Jeſus, (who had in fact admoniſhed them againſt Phariſaical doctrines) had reproved their neglect in not taking bread. He rebuked their worldly-mindedneſs therefore, and bad them conſider the two great 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21.

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nually coming and going; yet ſtill, as *many of them came from far, and had nothing to eat*, they were objects of compaſſion.

miracles, he had lately wrought to ſupply the neceſſities of ſo many thouſand people.

22. The boat landed them at Bethſaida, where a blind man was
23. ſoon after brought to them. Jeſus taking him a little out of the town, and touching his own tongue with the end of his finger, laid
24. it on the man's eye. An imperfect viſion was at firſt produced;
25. but on a ſecond touch, the man was perfectly reſtored. Jeſus
26. then ſending him home, forbad him to return to the town; or publiſh what he had done.

27. From Bethſaida Jeſus travelled through the towns in the neighbourhood of Ceſarea Philippi: and on the road, aſked his diſciples
28. the opinion of people in general about him? The diſciples an-
29. ſwered, that ſome ſaid he was John the Baptiſt—ſome Elias—and others, one of the prophets. But, ſaid Jeſus, Whom do you ſuppoſe me to be? Peter, with great warmth, anſwered, He be-
30. lieved him to be the Meſſiah. Jeſus however, for his own private reaſons, ordered them at preſent to keep that truth to themſelves.

31. 32. On this occaſion, for the firſt time, he began to prepare his diſciples for the great event, which was now approaching. I muſt ſuffer, ſaid he, many things: my doctrine, and offers of ſalvation ſhall be rejected by the Jewiſh rulers; and in the end I ſhall be put to death: but, on the third day, be aſſured, I will riſe again.

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23. See a note on Mark vii. 33.

26. See a note on Matt. viii. 4.

26. The peculiar ſecrecy which attended this miracle, Dr. Clark, and others, aſcribe *to Jeſus's knowing the impenitence, and unworthineſs of the people of Bethſaida.* But unleſs the motives of our Saviour's actions, at leaſt when there is any harſhneſs in them, are very plain, I think, it is as well to be ſilent about them. We know he often did work miracles before *unworthy people*; and even at Bethſaida in particular, he did *many mighty works.* Matt. xi. 21. We may well ſuppoſe, that many of our *Saviour's motives* may be hid from *us.*

30. See a note on Matt. viii. 4.

Peter

Peter having no conception of theſe things; and having his mind wholly occupied with worldly conſiderations, expreſſed in vehement language, his diſappointment.

Jeſus rebuked him with more than his uſual ſeverity on this occaſion, as a perſon, who oppoſed the great diſpenſations of God. 33.

Having thus ſpoken more plainly to his *diſciples*, than he had ever done before; he ſpoke alſo more plainly to the *people*. He took an occaſion to tell them, that his followers muſt not expect their happineſs from the pleaſures, and advantages of this life: but muſt purſue his ſteps through ſelf-denials, and afflictions; and muſt conſider their true loſs and gain, not as they are connected with this world; but as they are connected with the next. For what would it profit a man, ſaid he, if he ſhould gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul? Or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul? Let not therefore the reproaches, the contempt, or the example of bad men, deter you from the belief, and practice of your religion: but look forward to that time, when you may with confidence meet the ſon of man in all his glory. Even before this generation ſhall paſs away, you ſhall ſee evident ſigns of the power of the Meſſiah's kingdom. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. CHAP. IX. 1.

Jeſus having thus given his diſciples a diſtant view both of his ſufferings, and glory, thought it proper to awaken their hopes ſtill more forcibly by a viſible repreſentation. Taking with him therefore Peter, James, and John, he aſcended a lofty mountain; and was transfigured before them. In the midſt of a reſplendent light, his whole perſon aſſumed a dazzling luſtre; and he appeared ſupported, on his right, and left, by the two great prophets of the law, Moſes and Elias, both in the ſame luminous form, who ſeemed in earneſt converſation with him. 2. 3. 4.

The diſciples, tranſported with a variety of paſſions, wonder, joy, and fear, knew not where they were. Peter in a ſort of extatic agitation, 5. 6.

agitation, wiſhed to fix this glorious ſcene. Let us build, ſaid he, three tabernacles—one for You—another for Moſes—and a third for Elias.

7. While he ſpake, a cloud ſpread over the illumination; and a voice iſſued from it, This is my beloved ſon, hear him.

8. The cloud inſtantly diſpeſſing, the viſion was gone; and Jeſus was left alone, ſtanding with the three diſciples, as before.

9. As they deſcended the mountain, Jeſus injoined them to ſay
10. nothing of what they had ſeen, till after his reſurrection. This injunction they determined to obſerve; but at the ſame time, could not conceive what he meant by his reſurrection. They had
11. other ſcruples alſo. As the Scribes ſaid, that Elias muſt precede the Meſſiah; why ſhould they not convince them, by telling them (what had juſt now happened) that Elias was already come?

12. Jeſus told them, that it was indeed predicted, that Elias ſhould precede the Meſſiah; and prepare all things for his reception; and
13. that afterwards the Meſſiah himſelf ſhould ſuffer death. But that, in fact, the predicted Elias had already appeared; and had already ſuffered.—They eaſily perceived, that Jeſus ſpake of John the baptiſt; who was to *appear in the ſpirit, and power of Elias.*

14. When Jeſus arrived near the bottom of the mountain, he ſaw a great croud aſſembled about his diſciples; and ſome Scribes
15. earneſtly engaged in conference with them. But when he appeared, he immediately drew the reſpect, and attention of the whole aſſembly, which they diſcovered by great emotions of joy.

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9. See a note on Matt. viii. 4.

11. This ſenſe, which is adopted by ſome commentators, is, I think, the beſt.

15. The original ſays, *they were greatly amazed*; which ſome interpreters ſuppoſe was owing to the ſhining appearance of his face, like that of Moſes, when *he* came down from the mountain. But I think this, refinement.

Jeſus

Jeſus turning to the Scribes, aſked them, On what they were queſtioning his diſciples? 16.

Upon this, a perſon from the croud told him, they were queſtioning them about a ſon of his, who lay under the misfortune of a very grievous poſſeſſion. I brought him here, ſaid he, with an expectation of finding you: and in your abſence, I have applied to your diſciples: but they cannot relieve him. 17. 18.

Then Jeſus rebuking his diſciples for their want of faith, ordered the young man to be brought to him; and aſked his father (as he brought him forward, in the agony of a violent convulſion) how long he had ſuffered under that great calamity? 19. 20. 21. 22.

From his childhood, anſwered the father; and ſometimes he is even much worſe, than you now ſee him; and is in frequent hazard from fire, or water, or any thing elſe he comes near, that is dangerous.—But if you have power to heal him, have compaſſion on our diſtreſs.

Do you believe that I am able, ſaid Jeſus? No man ever truſted in God, without meeting his reward. 23.

Lord, I believe, ſaid the unhappy parent, with a burſt of tears: help my infirmity, if there be any deficiency in my faith. 24.

Jeſus then ſeeing the croud cloſing together from every part, rebuked the evil ſpirit with authority; and ordered it to leave the young man, and enter no more into him. On this, he was ſeized with a convulſion, and terribly agitated through his whole frame; till nature being quite ſpent, he ſank down totally inanimate: inſomuch that many thought him dead. But Jeſus taking him by the hand, raiſed him up perfectly reſtored. 25 26. 27.

After this, Jeſus retiring from the multitude into a houſe, his diſciples privately aſked him, Why they were unequal to the work, which he had juſt performed? Merely, ſaid Jeſus, through the 28.

want-

want of thoſe purified affections, and that ardent faith, which alone can work ſuch miracles as theſe.

30. Soon after this, Jeſus determining to go to Jeruſalem, paſſed through Galilee; wiſhing to go as privately, and meet with as little interruption, as poſſible.

31. In the way he reminded his diſciples of what he had before told them—that he ſhould be delivered into the hands of his enemies, who would put him to death; but on the third day he ſhould riſe
32. from the dead.—What he ſaid however made little impreſſion upon them; except to raiſe in their hearts ſome ambitious views: for they had no clear idea of the Meſſiah's kingdom; and were afraid to aſk for explanations.

33. Jeſus left them to themſelves during the journey; but when he arrived at Capernaum, he called them to him, and aſked them,
34. What they had been diſputing about on the road? But they were ſilent: for, in fact, they had been diſputing, which of them ſhould be the greateſt?

35. Jeſus knowing their thoughts, told them, that the only way, in which any man could be the greateſt in his kingdom, was to conſider himſelf as the leaſt.

36. 37. He then took a child; and holding it in his arms, That perſon, ſaid he, who wiſhes to be a member of my kingdom, muſt bring down his pride, his ambition, and all his worldly paſſions to ſuch innocence, as this. Nothing elſe will qualify him for it.

38. Here John, taking occaſion from what his maſter had juſt ſaid, told Jeſus, they had ſeen a perſon endeavouring to caſt out devils in his name; but as he had not profeſſed himſelf a diſciple, they had forbidden him.

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38. See a note on Matt. xii. 27.

But

But Jesus disapproved their conduct. No man, said he, can attempt to work a miracle in my name; who hath any enmity to my doctrine: and I wish to consider every one as for me, who is not openly against me. 39. 40.

Jesus then resuming his discourse, told them that a regard, or disregard to his doctrines should be the great test of the sincerity of mankind, wherever the gospel should be preached. The gospel, said he, no doubt, will bring its difficulties on men; and often interfere with the dearest of their worldly interests: but if they are true believers, and wish to avoid the guilt, and punishment of apostacy, they must persevere. As the sacrifice is purified by salt; so is the professor of the gospel by his trials. The great truths you receive, are in themselves good: be you properly prepared to dispense them.—And that I may draw my discourse to what gave occasion to it, lay aside all jealousies, and contentions about worldly matters, and live in perfect harmony with each other; as the only way receive the benefit of that gospel, which you teach. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50.

CHAP. X.

Having passed through Galilee, Jesus entered Judea; where many people met him; whom, as usual, he instructed. 1.

Among them were mixed several of the Pharisees, who with a view to take advantage of what should pass in his discourse, asked him, Whether it were lawful for a man to put away his wife?—The 2.

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44. 46. 48. In these verses St. Mark uses several times the phrase, *where their worm dieth not; and their fire is not quenched*; which Dr. Rymer (Rev. rel. p. 155) ingeniously supposes alludes to the two customs of *burying*, and *burning* dead bodies. In one the *worm*; in the other, the *fire* consumes: but hereafter neither *worm*, nor *fire* shall destroy.

50. There is great difficulty in this verse. The word *salt* seems to be taken in two different senses.—Bp. Pearce is of opinion, that και πασα θυσια αλι αλισθησεται (in the former verse) is an interpolation. (See his comment.) But in that verse, I think, the difficulty vanishes, if we translate και as ως, which is not unusual. The sense would then be, "Every Christian is salted with his trials, *as* the legal sacrifice, &c." But still there remains the difficulty of the 50th verse, which is the verse I should rather wish to consider as an interpolation.

difficulty lay in obliging him either, on one hand, to oppoſe what was generally thought allowed by the law; or on the other, to contradict what they had often heard was his own doctrine.

3. Jeſus, aware of their malice, aſked them, What the law of Moſes injoined on that head?

4. It injoined only (they anſwered) that the huſband ſhould give the wife a bill of divorce.

5. Jeſus replied, it was true: but added, that Moſes, in that matter, had been induced merely by the neceſſity of complying with a
6. 7. 8. hardened people. You will recollect, ſaid he, a law ſtill more ancient than that of Moſes, which injoins, in conſequence of God's *having made them male, and female*, that *a man ſhall leave his father, and mother, and cleave unto his wife; and they two ſhall be one fleſh.*
9. What God therefore hath joined together, let no man put aſunder.

10. 11. 12. Jeſus having thus ſilenced the Phariſees, retired into a houſe; where his diſciples deſired him to ſpeak more plainly on the ſubject of marriage. He told them, that his inſtitution founded this matter on the original law of God, and totally forbad a diſſolution of marriage, except merely in the caſe of adultery; and eſteemed both the man, and the woman, adulterers on a ſecond marriage, during the life of either party.

13. While Jeſus continued in the houſe with his diſciples, ſome people in the neighbourhood brought their children to him, deſiring, according to a common cuſtom among the Jews, that he would lay his hands upon them, and bleſs them. The diſciples rather thinking this a troubleſome intruſion, checked their forwardneſs.

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11. See Matt. xix. 9.

12. A woman was not permitted to put away her huſband by the Moſaic law: but it was often practiſed about the time of our Saviour; of which Joſephus gives ſeveral inſtances. The celebrated caſe of Herodias was one, who left her huſband Herod Philip; and was married to Herod Antipas.

But

But Jesus rebuking his disciples, bad them suffer the little children 14. 15.
to come unto him; for their innocence, and simplicity of manners,
were the true emblems of those virtues, which must adorn every
one, who wished to be a member of his kingdom. He then took 16.
them into his arms, laid his hands upon them, and blessed them.

Jesus, after this, continuing his journey towards Jerusalem, was 17.
met by a person of some distinction; who addressing him by the
name of *good master*, desired to know, by what means he might
obtain everlasting life?

Jesus observing from the manner of his address, that he ac- 18.
knowledged his divine pretensions, thought proper to put him to
a trial. He asked him first, How he had fulfilled his duty to his 19.
neighbour? Whether he had the breach of any commandment
on his conscience? The enquirer answering with great readiness 20.
on these heads, Jesus expressed his satisfaction so far. But, said 21.
he, let me ask you one thing more: Have you faith enough in me
(as you seem to acknowledge me to be the Messiah) to sell,
and give away all you have in this world; and trust in me for
that everlasting life you are in quest of?

This was a harder trial, than the young man was prepared for. 22.
He was very rich; and being thoroughly disappointed at finding how
great a sacrifice he was to make, retired abruptly, without any reply.

How almost impossible is it, said Jesus, turning to his diciples, 23.
for a rich man to become a sincere christian.

The disciples expressing their surprize at what he said, he ex- 24. 25.
plained himself by adding, that the difficulty arose, not so properly
from their having riches, as from their trusting in them—from
their being so attached to them, as this person was; who when
called on by his religion, could not give them up. It was impossible,

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18. See a note on Matt. xix. 18.

he ſaid, for any perſon, under the influence of ſuch a diſpoſition, to be a member of his kingdom.

26. 27. The diſciples ſtill expreſſing their uneaſineſs with regard to the condition of rich men, Jeſus explained himſelf farther, by obſerving, that he ſpoke of mere men, unſupported by the grace of God; but that all, who endeavoured to pleaſe God, whether rich, or poor, ſhould feel themſelves more and more ſtrengthened by his gracious aſſiſtance.

28. Peter encouraged by what his maſter had ſaid; in the fullneſs of his heart, cried out, that they had left all, and followed him.

29. 30. To this Jeſus made no particular reply, but in general ſaid, that no man gave up his worldly connections, and advantages for the ſake of the goſpel, who ſhould not find his ſelf-denials, and perſecutions (if he met with them) well repaid with a tranquil mind, a good conſcience, a heavenly communication, and a ſufficiency of all things, even in this world; while in the world to come h
31. might be aſſured of everlaſting happineſs.—But many, he added, who ought to put in the firſt claim to theſe heavenly advantages, will be found among the laſt; while they, from whom leſs could be expected, will ſtand among the firſt.

32. 33. 34. Jeſus by this time approached Jeruſalem; and his diſciples fearing, from what he had frequently ſaid, that ſome great event, tho they knew not what, was about to take place; began to be apprehenſive, and uneaſy. Jeſus perceiving their diſtreſs, called them to him; and mentioning again thoſe ſufferings, which he was now about to undergo at Jeruſalem; repeated the aſſurance he had given

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31. Our Saviour ſeems chiefly to have had the Jews, and Gentiles in his eye; the former of whom rejected the goſpel, tho it might have been expected, they would have been the firſt to receive it: while the latter, from whom little could be expected, ſhould receive it with great gladneſs.

them,

them, that, after theſe ſufferings were over, on the third day, he ſhould riſe again from the dead.

This aſſurance, tho they knew not well the meaning of what 35. 36. 37.
their maſter had ſaid, began however to raiſe their hopes; but at the ſame time it raiſed their ambition. They conceived his riſing from the dead under ſome idea of temporal power; and two of them, James, and John, who had often been diſtinguiſhed by their maſter, thought they had a good pretence at this time, to put in a claim for ſuperior honours.

Jeſus gently rebuking them, told them, they knew not what 38. 39. 40.
they aſked—that the paſſage to his kingdom led not through places of diſtinguiſhed honours; but through ſufferings, and death—and that altho they might, and he knew they ſhould, purſue his painful ſteps; yet ſtill the degrees of pre-eminence in heaven were not diſpoſed of, like honours upon earth, by favour, and partiality; but were reſerved for thoſe, who by their piety, and perſeverance, ſhould make themſelves moſt worthy of them.

In the mean time, this forwardneſs in the two ſons of Zebedee 41.
raiſed the jealouſy of the other ten diſciples; and gave Jeſus a new opportunity of inſtructing them. It muſt not, ſaid he, be among 42. 43. 44.
you; as it is among the contenders for earthly honours. They ſtrive ambitiouſly for ſuperior power, and authority. Your ſtriſe muſt be of a different kind. He, among you, who wiſhes to be the greateſt, muſt make himſelf the leaſt; and conſider humility as the principal qualification in obtaining ſuperiority in my kingdom. You cannot ſurely expect more worldly authority, than your 45.
maſter aſpires after; who makes himſelf the ſervant of all; and lays down even his life as a ranſom for the world.

Jeſus, by this time, had arrived at Jericho: and as he left that 46.
town, being attended by a great multitude of people, a blind man, of the name of Bartimeus, who ſat begging by the road ſide, hear-

ing

47. ing that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, called out to him by
48. the title of the Messiah; and intreated his mercy.—The people
49. 50. 51. displeased at such importunity, endeavoured to repress it. But Jesus
52. coming to the place, ordered the man to be brought to him; and asked him, What benefit he particularly desired? The man answered, with strong expressions of faith, that he might recover his sight. Jesus told him, his faith had made him an object of mercy; and immediately restored him: on which the man joined the multitude, and followed Jesus.

CHAP. XI.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. Soon after, Jesus arrived at Bethphage, and Bethany, villages at the foot of the mount of Olives, very near Jerusalem; and intending now to enter that city in a public manner, he sent two of his disciples to one of the neighbouring towns; and describing in what circumstances they should find an ass's colt, he ordered them to bring it to him; telling them what they should say to the owner of it, if any questions should be asked. Accordingly they brought it without difficulty; and throwing their garments over it, they
8. 9. 10. set Jesus thereon. The multitude, in the mean time, shewing all the demonstrations of joy, which were usual on the most solemn occasions; spreading flowers, and even their garments in the way, preceded, and followed him, crying, Hosannah to the son of David: Blessed is he, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosannah in the highest!

11. In this triumphant manner Jesus entered Jerusalem; and going into the temple examined every thing; and in the evening retired with his disciples to Bethany.

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1. See an account of the situation of these places in a note on Matt. xxiv. 3.

8. See a note on Matt. xxi. 8.

10. See the parallel passage in Matt. xxi. 9.

The

The next morning, as he returned to Jeruſalem, he was hungry; 12. 13.
and obſerving a fig-tree, he came up to it, expecting fruit; but found only leaves. He made it therefore an example to his diſciples of the unprofitableneſs of a dead faith.

On entering Jeruſalem, he went immediately into the temple; and 15.
finding the courts of the gentiles, where proſelytes uſed to worſhip, full of people trading with their goods, under the pretence of furniſhing animals for the temple-ſacrifices, he drove them all out with authority; and would not ſuffer any burthens to be carried through the 16.
courts; quoting that paſſage of Iſaiah; *The ſons of the ſtrangers, that* 17.
join themſelves to the Lord, will I bring to my holy mountain; and make them joyful in my houſe of prayer. For my houſe ſhall be called a houſe of prayer for all nations.

Theſe things, it may eaſily be ſuppoſed, gave great offence to the 18.
chief prieſts: but they durſt only plot in private againſt Jeſus; being afraid of taking any public meaſures, leſt they ſhould alarm the people, who had a high veneration for him.

In the evening, Jeſus retired again to Bethany; and the next morn- 19. 20. 21.
ing returned, as before, with his diſciples to Jeruſalem. As they went paſt the fig-tree, Peter obſerved, that it was withered to the roots: on which Jeſus took occaſion to impreſs on them the neceſſity 22.

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13. The deiſts find here great matter of ridicule. The text tells us, ſay they, *the time of figs was not yet*. How then, could Jeſus poſſibly expect fruit, at a ſeaſon, when there *could* be none? But the words καιρος συκων here probably ſignifies, not the time, when figs *were ripe*; but the time when they *were gathered*; which was not, till the ſheaf of the firſt-fruits had been waved before the Lord. The ſenſe of the paſſage therefore runs thus; "And ſeeing a fig-tree he came to it, expecting to find fruit on it, as he well might, becauſe the time of gathering fruit was not yet come."—They who are not ſatisfied with this explication, may ſee a long criticiſm on the ſubject in *Bowyer's conjectures*.

17. Iſa. lvi. 7.

22. The barren fig-tree is ſometimes conſidered as an emblem of the rejection of the Jews: but as it ſeems to have been held out only to *the diſciples*, I prefer the interpretation I have given.

of

23. of a ſtrong exertion of faith. There is no miracle, ſaid he, beyond
24. its power to effect. If ſteady faith accompany your prayers, you may
25. be aſſured of receiving what you pray for; only ſtill you will remember, that a forgiving diſpoſition muſt be united to your prayers. Nothing elſe can carry them to the throne of God.

27. 28. By this time, they had entered Jeruſalem; and Jeſus going into the temple, began again his cuſtomary employment of teaching the people.

The chief prieſts, and ſcribes, in the mean time, had taken new courage; and coming to Jeſus, demanded, by what authority he did theſe things? alluding particularly to the violence he had ſhewn, the day before, in the courts of the temple.

29. 30. Jeſus knowing their malice, told them, that before he anſwered their queſtion, he muſt aſk another. Was John's miſſion, ſaid he, of *divine*, or of *human* origin?—This *queſtion* was in fact, an *anſwer*; for whatever John's authority was, ſuch alſo was that of Jeſus.

31. 32. The chief prieſts eaſily ſaw the difficulty. *Human* they durſt not call it; becauſe every body believed John to be a prophet: and if they ſhould ſay, it was *divine*, the reply was obvious; Why then did you
33. not believe him? They were obliged therefore to tell Jeſus, they could not reſolve his queſtion. Neither then, ſaid Jeſus, ſhall I reſolve yours.

CHAP. XII.

1. Jeſus having thus ſilenced the chief prieſts, continued the ſubject, by ſetting before them, in the audience of the people, their hardened, impenitent, and dangerous ſtate—the ungrateful returns, which the Jewiſh nation had made to God, for all his calls of mercy—and

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23. This promiſe of our Saviour to his diſciples, I apprehend, relates chiefly to the enabling of them to perform miracles; yet in a degree it may be applicable to all Chriſtians, as affording them aſſiſtance in the midſt of difficulties, and diſtreſſes, which may appear like removing mountains.

1. See a note on Matt. xxi. 33.

finally

finally God's intention of caſting them off; and adopting the gentiles in their room.

A perſon, ſaid he, planted a vineyard; and having furniſhed it with every thing neceſſary, left it in the hands of labourers, and took a journey. At the proper ſeaſon, he ſent a ſervant to the labourers for 2. 3. 4. 5.
the fruits of it. But they paid no regard to the meſſage; and even ill-treated the meſſenger. Others, ſent on the ſame errand, they uſed with the ſame indignity; and even put ſome of them to death. At laſt, the maſter of the vineyard ſent his only ſon; not doubting, but that to him they would pay a proper reſpect. But it happened other- 7. 8.
wiſe. Theſe wicked labourers, loſt to all ſenſe of goodneſs, put even the ſon himſelf to death; concluding, that now they ſhould divide the vineyard among themſelves. What therefore, continued Jeſus, ſhall 9.
the Lord of the vineyard do to thoſe wicked labourers? He will come with power; and deſtroying them, give his vineyard to others. Have you never read, ſaid he, that *the ſtone which the builders rejected, is be-* 10.
come the head of the corner; and that this is the Lord's doing; and ſhall 11.
be marvellous in our eyes†?

To this ſtrong reproof the chief prieſts were unable to reply. They 12.
perceived plainly, that the parable was pointed at them; and were ſtung with malice: but not daring to ſhew it openly, through a fear of the people, they retired a ſecond time to plot in private.

Their next endeavour was to inſnare him, and draw matter of con- 13.
viction from his own mouth. With this view they ſent ſome of the Phariſees, and Herodians to him; who pretending great reverence to- 14.
wards him, and as if wiſhing to ſatisfy their conſciences by his deciſion, deſired to have his opinion on the great national queſtion, Whether it were lawful to pay tribute to Cæſar? His anſwer, whether in the negative, or affirmative, muſt of courſe offend either

† Pſ. cxviii. 22. 23.

15. the Romans, or the Jews.—Jeſus knowing their deſign, avoided
16. the ſnare by deſiring to ſee the tribute-money. Whoſe image, ſaid he, and inſcription, does this coin bear?—They anſwered
17. Cæſar's. Give then to Cæſar, ſaid he, the things that are Cæſar's; and to God, the things that are God's.—The Phariſees, and Herodians finding themſelves totally unequal to his wiſdom, were aſtoniſhed, and retired.

18. A body of Sadducees came to him next. They did not believe a future ſtate; and brought a queſtion to him, which on a ſuppoſition there was one, appeared to them of uncommon difficulty.—
19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. Maſter, ſaid they, Moſes commanded, that if a man die without children, his brother ſhall take his wife, and raiſe a family to preſerve his brother's name. Now we have an inſtance of ſeven brethren, who, ſucceſſively, married the ſame woman; we ſhould be glad to know therefore, if there be a reſurrection, which of them ſhall hereafter be the woman's huſband?

25. In this queſtion, replied Jeſus, you ſhew your ignorance both of the *power of God*; and of the *truth of ſcripture:* For in the firſt place, the ſtate of the next world is not accommodated to the condition of this: marriage, which is neceſſary here, will be unneceſſary there.

26. Then again, with regard to your main queſtion, if you believe the ſcriptures, you muſt alſo believe the reſurrection of the dead. For in ſcripture God calls himſelf the God of Abraham, and the
27. God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob. Do you not then ſee the abſurdity of ſuppoſing, that God ſhould ſtile himſelf the God of perſons, who were not really in a ſtate of exiſtence?

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19. Deut. xxv. 5.

This

This anſwer ſilenced the Sadducees. But one of the Scribes, who had heard what paſſed; and perceiving the propriety, with which Jeſus had anſwered them, aſked him, Which was the principal part of the law? 28.

Jeſus referred him to the moral part—his duty to God, and his neighbour; and placed the ſum of religion in the obſervance, and ſubordination, of theſe great points. 29. 30. 31.

To this the ſcribe aſſented; declaring, that in his opinion, God reſpected the performance of thoſe duties greatly beyond ſacrifice, or any other religious ceremony. 32. 33.

Jeſus, pleaſed with his anſwer, told him, he was not far from having a juſt idea of thoſe doctrines, and of that holy kingdom, which the goſpel meant to eſtabliſh. 34. 35. 36. 37.

While the Scribes ſtill continued in the temple, Jeſus aſked them, in what way they explained that paſſage of David, *The Lord ſaid unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies*

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28. There ſeems to be a difference here, between the accounts of St. Matthew and St. Mark. St. Matthew. (xxii. 35.) ſays, the Scribe came (πειραζων) with *an inſidious intention*, and evidently introduces him under this idea. *When the Phariſees had heard, that he had put the Sadducees to ſilence, they were gathered together. Then one of them*, &c. St. Mark's account has manifeſtly a different tendency. Some expoſitors, Dr. Clark in particular, reconcile the two accounts by ſuppoſing, he came at firſt πειραζων; and afterwards became convinced. But this does not intirely reconcile them; for St. Mark ſays, the Scribe had been attending to the diſcourſe of Jeſus, and perceived that *he had anſwered well*.—Beſides, I do not ſee how a queſtion of this kind was calculated for any *inſidious purpoſe*.

But perhaps the Scribe's behaviour, (who probably acted with great caution) might have ſtruck St. Matthew in one way; and the apoſtle, whoever he was, who inſtructed St. Mark, in another. The great point, which was intended to be ſhewn, was the preference, which Jeſus gave to the moral law above the ceremonial: and to this point both the evangeliſts attended; paying little regard perhaps to other circumſtances.

29. Our Saviour's anſwer to the Scribe is interpreted by Dr. Clark, as adverting to the difference between the *moral* and *ceremonial* law; which, I think, appears moſt agreeable to the context.

thy footſtool. This you all acknowledge, ſaid he, to be ſpoken of the Meſſiah; and yet you ſee, David calls him *his Lord.* How then do you reconcile this with his being David's ſon?

To this no anſwer was given. And indeed from this time, none either of the chief prieſts, the Scribes, or the Phariſees, ever ventured to put a queſtion to him again: while the common people ſeemed evidently to rejoice in the great ſuperiority, which he had acquired.

38. 39. 40. Jeſus then turning to the people, diſmiſſed them with a caution againſt the hypocriſy of the Scribes. They affect every thing, ſaid he, that is grave, ſolemn, and ſanctified; they claim to themſelves ſuperiority; and as an atonement for their oppreſſions, make long prayers. Few ſinners have more guilt in the eyes of God.

41. As Jeſus, after theſe diſcourſes, was leaving the temple, he obſerved the people throwing their offerings into the treaſury; and
42. many, who were rich, giving largely. Among others, he obſerved a poor widow, who came, and threw in two mites, which together make only a farthing. Jeſus thought this a proper opportunity
43. 44. to inſtruct his diſciples in the nature of alms-giving. This poor widow, ſaid he, hath thrown into the treaſury a gift more acceptable to God, than any of thoſe you have juſt ſeen offered: for God meaſures the charitable action, not by the largeneſs of the gift, but by the motive of the giver.

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41. There were cheſts placed in the courts of the temple, in which people put their voluntary contributions, for furniſhing bullocks, ſheep, wood, ſalt, and other things neceſſary for ſacrifices.

44. This ſentiment, tho not *expreſſed,* in the text, is certainly *implied.* Our Saviour ſays, ſhe *gave more.* More in *reality* ſhe certainly did *not* give. It muſt therefore be *more* from ſome *accompaniment.*

As

CHAP. XIII.

As they left the temple, one of the difciples examining it with particular attention, defired his mafter to obferve the fize of the ftones, and fplendor of the whole building. 1.

Jefus told him, that, vaft, and fplendid as it was, in a little time, not one ftone fhould be left upon another. 2.

Nothing more was faid on the fubject at that time; but as they retired in the evening, and fat down on the fide of the mount of Olives, in direct view of the temple, fome of the difciples afked Jefus, When this great revolution, of which he fpoke, fhould happen? and what figns fhould precede it? 3. 4.

One of the firft figns, faid he, fhall be the appearance of impoftors, under the title of prophets, and Meffiahs, who fhall make great pretences to deliver the Jews; and fhall deceive *many*. *You* I have warned againft them. 5. 6.

You will next hear of commotions, wars, famines, and other diftreffes. Thefe things will bring on apace the approaching deftruction. 7. 8.

In the mean time, you muft expect perfecution. You muft be brought, to anfwer for the truth, before the great men, and kings of the earth. Thus you fhall be the happy means of introducing the gofpel among the gentiles. 9. 10.

In thefe circumftances be not afraid; nor meditate for anfwers. You fhall then be under the direction of an all-powerful affiftance. Only be prepared for the worft in this world: for the religion you preach is fo contrary to the views, and paffions, and prejudices of men, that their malice, and oppofition to it will overpower every natural affection. Keep the eye of faith therefore fteadily fixed on the great end of all your labours, and fufferings. 11. 12. 13.

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1. Jofephus fpeaks of the ftones, of which the temple was built, as of an amazing fize. Some of them, he fays, were fixty feet in length.

The

14. 15. 16. 17. 18. The laſt ſign of this great deſtruction, ſhall be the approach of the Roman army; which the prophet Daniel calls, *the abomination of deſolation*; alluding to the heathen armies ſurrounding the holy temple of God. When this ſign comes on, be aſſured, the deſtruction I have predicted, is at hand. Then let all, who believe this prophecy, eſcape from a guilty city: let them pray to God to
19. remove all obſtructions; and aſſiſt their flight: for among all the calamities, that ever happened to mankind, or ever ſhall happen, nothing ever was, or ſhall be, greater than this. And unleſs God, in his
20. regard for his choſen ſervants, ſhall ſhorten thoſe days of diſtreſs, the whole Jewiſh nation muſt inevitably periſh.

21. 22. 23. In the midſt of theſe calamities, impoſtors ſhall ſtill ariſe, and perſuade people to acts of ſedition, through the hopes of deliverance. But I have forewarned you not to be ſeduced by any of theſe pretences.

24. 25. Such are the ſigns, which ſhall precede the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. From this time the Jewiſh government ſhall totally ceaſe;
26. 27. and the whole Jewiſh nation ſhall hence forwards become a ſtanding proof of the eſtabliſhment of the Meſſiah's kingdom. The miniſters of Chriſt ſhall be ſent out to draw thoſe into one fold, from every part of the world, who believe in the goſpel.

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19. Whoever reads the account, which Joſephus gives of the ſiege of Jeruſalem—the ferocity of the enemy without—the famine within—and, above all, the rage, and cruelty of contending factions in the midſt of all this ſcene of horror; will be inclined to think theſe words of our Saviour, tho in ſome degree hyperbolical, do not greatly exceed the miſery they deſcribe.

22. *Shall riſe, and ſhew*; might be tranſlated, *ſhall riſe, and make oſtentation of:* they ſhall not really perform; but pretend to perform.

25. The heavenly bodies are uſual figures in the Jewiſh language to deſcribe earthly potentates. Iſaiah is frequent in the uſe of them. Nay inſtances might be brought from the Talmud, in which theſe lofty figures are uſed to deſcribe the ruin even of private families.

As

As ſurely therefore as you know the approach of ſummer by 28.
the budding of the tree; ſo ſurely may you know the approach of 29.
theſe calamities by the ſigns I have given you. Even before the 30.
preſent generation end, this great event ſhall take place. Heaven 31.
and earth ſhall be diſſolved, and paſs away: but the great truths, which I have ſet before you, be aſſured, ſhall be compleatly fulfilled.

That great event, the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, is a ſign, or 32. 33.
type of that ſtill greater event, the diſſolution of heaven and earth, and the final conſummation of all things.—The time indeed of *this* latter event God only knows; but your ignorance of the time ſhould be a great argument for conſtant preparation. I am about to leave you. As a maſter taking a journey, leaves his 34.
houſe, and goods under the care of his ſervants, whom he exhorts to be circumſpect, and attentive; ſo I exhort you to be thoſe 35. 36.
faithful ſervants, that at whatever time your maſter call, at an early hour, or a late one, you may be well prepared to receive him.—
Nor is this great preparation a doctrine intended for your uſe 37.
alone; but muſt be ſtrongly inculcated on all, who deſire to be my diſciples.

CHAP. XIV.

While Jeſus held theſe divine diſcourſes with his diſciples, the
chief prieſts, and Scribes had been conſulting how to deſtroy him: 1. 2.
but as he was ſo much reverenced by the people, they had laid

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32. Our Saviour mixes together the two great ideas of the deſtruction of the Jewiſh nation, and the end of the world. The two ideas are very diſtinguiſhable; tho the blending of their colours is not eaſily ſeparated, either here or in St. Matthew: but here the relation is more conciſe, and therefore more difficult. It is not indeed expreſſed in the text that the deſtruction of Jeruſalem was a type of the conſummation of all things: but this ſeems to be the idea.

33. Here another idea, that of death, is introduced; which is to each individual the ſame as the general conſummation of all things.

aſide

aſide all thoughts of ſeizing him at the paſſover, when ſuch multitudes were aſſembled.

3. From the open part of the mount of Olives, where Jeſus had been ſitting with his diſciples, he retired, as uſual, to Bethany; where at the houſe of Simon the leper, the following circumſtance happened. As he ſat at meat, a woman brought a box of very precious ointment, which, in great reſpect, ſhe poured upon his
4. 5. head. Some at the table, taking offence at this, as a waſte of what might have been ſold for a conſiderable ſum, and given to
6. the poor, found fault with the woman. But Jeſus anſwered;
7. Cenſure her not: her zeal is highly praiſe-worthy. The poor you have always with you, as the objects of your charity. This is an
8. extraordinary occaſion. She hath ſhewn her regard for me by
9. anointing my body for its burial; and wherever the goſpel ſhall be preached, this act, unworthy as you may eſteem it, ſhall be recorded to her praiſe.

10. It was at this time that Judas firſt meditated the deſign of betraying his maſter. With this purpoſe he went to the chief prieſts; and offered, for a proper reward, to conduct their officers, where they might ſeize him with the greateſt privacy.

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3. Συντριψασα, ſhe *brake the box*. This ſhould not be applied to the box, but to *ſhaking*, or *breaking*, the ointment; which ſeparates the parts, and diffuſes the fragrance more ſtrongly.

——— Fracta magis redolere videntur
Omnia, quòd contrita———

Anointing with perfumes was common at the feaſts of the ancients.

Ciboria exple: funde capacibus
Unguenta de conchis———

Hor. car. II. 7.

It was common alſo to uſe boxes made of alabaſter, as well as ſhells. *Hunc aliqui lapidem alabaſtritem vocant, quem cavant ad vaſa unguentaria, quoniam optimè ſervare incorrupta dicitur.*

Plin. de Marmor.

10. See a note on Matt. xxvi. 14.

This

This offer was received with joy. An agreement was made; and thirty pieces of ſilver were given; for which Judas engaged to bring them the earlieſt intelligence of Jeſus's retirement. 11.

In the mean time the paſſover approached; and Jeſus having yet made no preparations for it, the diſciples mentioned it to him: on which he ordered two of them to go into the city, where they ſhould find a man in ſuch circumſtances, as he deſcribed, entering a houſe. This perſon they were inſtructed to follow, and to aſk for a chamber, where they might eat the paſſover. All this was done, and an upper-room, well-furniſhed, was ſhewn them, where proper preparation was made. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16.

Jeſus, ſoon after, came with the twelve: and as they ſat at meat, he told them plainly, that one of them ſhould betray him. This threw the whole table into great anxiety; each being ſolicitous to know whom he meant. 17. 18. 19.

It is one, ſaid Jeſus, who now eateth with me. It is neceſſary for the ſalvation of the world, that the ſon of man ſhould die, as the prophets have foretold: but that is no excuſe for him, by whom he is betrayed. Wretched is the ſtate of that guilty perſon. 20. 21.

After ſupper, Jeſus took bread, and giving thanks, brake it, and gave it among his diſciples, ſaying, Eat this, in a ſolemn manner, in remembrance of my body, which is given for you. Then taking the cup, he preſented it alſo to them, ſaying, Drink this likewiſe, in remembrance of my blood, which is ſhed for you. From henceforward, let the paſſover ceaſe; and let this ceremony be eſtabliſhed in it's room, among all chriſtians. 22. 23. 24. 25.

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16. See a note on Matt. xxvi. 19.
21. See a note on Matt. xxvi. 25.
25. See a note on Matt. xxvi. 29.

26. After the celebration of this rite, they ſang a hymn; and Jeſus retired with them, as uſual, towards the mount of Olives.

27. That ſevere time of trial, (ſaid he to them, as they walked) of which I have ſo often warned you, is now at hand——that time, of which the prophet ſpeaks, *I will ſmite the ſhepherd, and the ſheep ſhall*
28. *be ſcattered.*——Be not however diſcouraged: after I am riſen from the dead, I will meet you again in Galilee.

29. Peter, with great vehemence, anſwered his maſter by declaring,
30. that whoever ſhould be offended, he certainly never ſhould. Jeſus bad him not be ſo forward in his zeal; aſſuring him that, that very night, before the cock ſhould crow twice, he ſhould deny him
31. thrice. Peter with ſtill greater confidence replied, he might die with him; but to deny him was impoſſible; in which language they all united.

32. 33. By this time they were come to a part of the mount of Olives, called Gethſemane, from the oil-preſſes, which ſtood there.

34. Here Jeſus leaving all his diſciples, except Peter, James, and John, went with theſe three a little farther; and fell into an agony. My ſoul, ſaid he, is exceedingly ſorrowful, even unto death: wait here a while, and watch with me.

35. He then went forward a few paces, and falling on the ground, he
36. prayed, that if it were poſſible, that hour might paſs from him. All things, O my Father, ſaid he, are poſſible with thee——take this cup from me——Nevertheleſs not my will, but thine, be done.

37. Then returning to his diſciples, and finding them heavy with ſleep, he rebuked them for their great unconcern in an hour of ſuch diſtreſs.

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26. See a note on Matt. xxvi. 30.
27. See Zech. xiii. 7.

Watch

Watch, ſaid he, and pray for God's aſſiſtance in this time of trial. 38.
The ſpirit truly is ready; but the fleſh is weak.

Having ſaid this, he went a ſecond time, and prayed in the ſame 39. 40.
manner. When he came back he found them again heavy, and
confuſed.

Returning a third time, he told them,—his agony was now paſt 41. 42.
——and other trials ſhould immediately come on. Ariſe, ſaid he;
the great event is at hand.

He had ſcarce ſpoken, when a number of armed men appeared 43. 44. 45.
with Judas at their head; who went up to Jeſus, and ſaluted him.
The officers, and ſervants of the chief prieſts on this immediately
ſeized him.

This violence at firſt raiſed the oppoſition of the diſciples; and 46. 47.
one of them drawing a ſword, wounded a ſervant of the high-prieſt.
Jeſus in the mean time, expoſtulated with them for this ſecret, and 48.
inſidious manner of taking him; telling them, they had frequent 49.
opportunities of ſeizing him openly in the temple, if they had any
legal charge againſt him.——But the ſcriptures, added he, muſt
be fulfilled.

The diſciples, ſeeing now, that all was over, provided for their 50.
own ſafety by flight. One young man among them the ſervants 51. 52.
ſeized: but he leaving his garment in their hands, eſcaped.

From the mount of Olives Jeſus was immediately carried before 53.
the high-prieſt; with whom were aſſembled, tho it was now late,
the principal of the Jewiſh Sanhedrim.

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52. People in warm countries, uſed often to wear no other dreſs than a ſimple piece of cloth. Hanging one corner of it before, over the left ſhoulder, they brought it behind, and ſo circling the body, threw it again over the left ſhoulder, the lappet hanging behind.—Or, the ſenſe need not require that he fled from them literally *naked*; but only without his *upper garment*.

54. Among the croud of officers, and ſervants, Peter, who had followed at a diſtance, now mixed himſelf; and entering the palace, ſat down with others at the fire.

55. The chief-prieſts, who were determined at any rate to put Jeſus to death, wiſhed however to have as much as poſſible the appearance of juſtice on their ſide; and with this view they had prepared
56. what evidence they could: but every depoſition was ſo ſlight, and trifling, that it was impoſſible to found a charge on any thing that was depoſed.

57. 58. Among other accuſations, it was atteſted, that he had been heard to ſay, *I will deſtroy this temple made with hands, and within three days*
59. *I will build another without hands.* But neither did this appear of weight ſufficient for their purpoſe.

60. The high prieſt then riſing up, aſked Jeſus, What he had to ſay
61. in his own defence? But as he had been charged with nothing, he anſwered nothing.

Among other queſtions the high-prieſt aſked him, Whether he was the Chriſt?

62. To this Jeſus thought proper to anſwer in the affirmative; and referred him to a grand event, the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, ſpeedily coming on, for a confirmation of his pretenſions.

63. 64. This was all, that was deſired. The high-prieſt in great emotion, cried out, What need we further witneſſes? you have heard the blaſphemy.

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54. It was then near midnight, which might be cold at that ſeaſon, tho the day might be warm. This all travellers tell us is a common caſe.

56. Ισαι αι μαρτυριαι ουκ ησαν: *The depoſitions were not equal*——that is, either equal to a ſentence of death; or perhaps, becauſe they were contradictory.

62. Tho Jeſus's referring the high prieſt to ſuch an event, could have no effect at *that time*; yet it furniſhed a ſtrong, and perhaps a *recorded* argument afterwards. It then became prophecy.

On

On this, the whole council resolved, they had now sufficient evidence to reach his life.

The assembly then rose, and for the present left him in the hands of the servants; who seemed to vye with each other in shewing him every instance of indignity, and offensive behaviour. 65.

In the mean time Peter continuing in the hall, was accosted by a servant maid, as a person, that belonged to Jesus. But in great agitation he denied, that he had any knowledge of him. He left the hall however, and went out into the porch; where he heard the cock crow. 66. 67. 68.

It happened, while he was there, another maid seeing him repeated the former observation; which Peter denied a second time. Soon after some other people coming up, affirmed, there could be no doubt about the matter; for his very speech betrayed him to be a Galilean.—On this Peter, with vehement imprecations, declared, that he was not even acquainted with Jesus. 69. 70. 71.

Soon after, he heard the cock crow a second time; which brought the words of Jesus full into his memory. In an agony of distress he ran out; and gave vent in private, to the bitterest tears of self-conviction, and remorse. 72.

Thus far the chief priests had been endeavouring only to procure evidence against Jesus; for they had no power, under the Romans, to put a criminal to death. They had concerted the matter how- CHAP. XV. 1.

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72. The word επιβαλων cannot signify, *when he thought thereon.* Some render it, as here, he *ran* or *threw himself out:* and others, he *covered his head with a mantle.*——None of the evangelists hath related so circumstantially, as St. Mark, the denial of St. Peter, which hath always been considered as a singular argument of the simplicity, truth, and openness of St. Peter's character. As St. Mark is allowed, on all hands, to have written from him, it is probable, he was obliged by that apostle to be particularly circumstantial in the detail of this event.

ever

ever ſo, as to carry him, tho at that early hour, for it now drew towards morning, before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor; who was on all occaſions ready to oblige them. But as they did
2. not think, that Jeſus's confeſſing himſelf to be *the Meſſiah* would have much weight with a heathen magiſtrate, they changed the word *Meſſiah* into *the king of the Jews*; which, tho an equivalent expreſſion in the language of their prophets; was yet greatly more offenſive to the Romans. Pilate accordingly aſked him, whether he really profeſſed any claim of this kind? To this Jeſus anſwered, that he did not in a temporal ſenſe, as they accuſed him; but in a ſpiritual ſenſe he did.

3. 4. 5. In the mean time, the chief prieſts laid many, and grievous accuſations to his charge: but he anſwered nothing; which Pilate took notice of with ſurpriſe.

6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. That magiſtrate however ſoon perceiving, that the matter was of very frivolous import, determined on an expedient to releaſe him.

It was an annual cuſtom, at the paſſover, for the Roman governor to releaſe a priſoner, at the option of the people: and as there happened to be, at that time, a very notorious offender, one Barrabbas, in cuſtody; Pilate ſuppoſed, that, as the difference between Jeſus and him was ſo very ſtriking, the people could not heſitate about the matter. It happened however otherwiſe; for as Pilate plainly ſhewed an inclination to ſave Jeſus, they clamoured the louder, deſiring, that they might have their privilege of option: and requeſted, that Barrabbas might be the favoured perſon.

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11. This cannot well be ſuppoſed of *the people in general*, at that early hour, before they could be collected; but rather of the ſervants, and retainers of the temple; who, no doubt, amounted to a large body. And even theſe were wrought up by the chief-prieſts, as it appears, to favour their deſign. See Matt. xv. 11.

Pilate

Pilate again demanding, in a ſort of deriſion, with a view to 12.
raiſe compaſſion, what he ſhould then do with the king of the 13.
Jews? they all cried out, demanding that he might be crucified.

Pilate, a third time interfering, informed them, that nothing 14.
worthy of death had been laid to his charge. But it availed nothing:
the clamour roſe higher; and they all with one voice demanded,
that he might be crucified.

Pilate therefore unwilling to diſoblige the high-prieſt, and his 15.
party, releaſed Barrabbas; and condemned Jeſus to be ſcourged
and crucified.

Jeſus was then delivered to the ſoldiers for execution, who had 16.
the ſame liberty allowed them of exerciſing their wanton cruelty
upon him, which had been allowed before to the ſervants of the
high prieſt. They immediately called the whole cohort together
into the guard-room; where cloathing Jeſus in a purple robe; 17.
and putting a mock-crown on his head; and a reed for a ſceptre
in his hand, they firſt retired a few paces, and ſaluting him, cried, 18.
Hail, king of the Jews. Then taking the reed out of his hand, 19.
they ſtruck him on the head; and ſpit upon him.—Then retiring
again, as if they had been guilty of ſome high offence, they
worſhipped him as a God.

After they had thus ſated their brutal malice, they took off the 20.
purple robe, and replacing his own garments, led him to death; 21.

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15. See a note on Matt. xxvii. 26.

17. See Matt. xxvii. 29.

18. See a note on Matt. xxvii. 29.

21. He is ſaid to be *the father of Alexander and Rufus*. Theſe perſons were probably well known at that time.—Theſe little indirect appeals to perſons, (which are frequent in the new teſtament,) are commonly thought, and with juſtice, to be an argument in favour of the truth of theſe ſimple narratives.

21. See a note on Matt. xxvii. 32.

obliging

obliging one Simon, a Cyrenian, whom they accidentally met, and probably ſuppoſed to be his diſciple, to aſſiſt him in bearing his croſs.

22. 23. 24. 25. 26. Having thus brought Jeſus to a mount called Golgotha, which ſignifies the place of a ſkull, they offered him in deriſion, after his fatigue, an imbittered draught, which he refuſed.

It was now only nine o'clock in the morning; ſo expeditiouſly had the chief prieſts hurried over the affair, ſince his apprehenſion on the preceding evening. The ſoldiers then nailed him to the croſs, and placing over his head an inſcription, *The king of the Jews*, they ſat down to part his garments among them. Two
27. 28. malefactors alſo were crucified with him, one on each hand; ſo compleatly was the prophecy of Iſaiah fulfilled, which deſcribes the Meſſiah, *as being numbered with tranſgreſſors*.

29. 30. What had been alledged againſt him at his trial, was now retorted with great ſcorn: *Thou, that deſtroyeſt the temple, and buildeſt it in three days; ſave thyſelf, and come down from the croſs.*

31. 32. The chief prieſts alſo and Scribes joined their revilings with thoſe of the people: *He ſaved others*, they cried, *let him now ſave himſelf: let Chriſt, the king of Iſrael, deſcend from the croſs, and we will believe.*

33. About twelve o'clock, a ſudden darkneſs ſpread over the ſun; and threw an awful gloom over the whole tranſaction.

34. At three, Jeſus, who had now hung ſix hours on the croſs in patient ſuffering, being in the agony of death, cried out, *Eloi, Eloi, lama ſabacthani:* My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?

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28. See Iſaiah liii. 12.

34. See a note on Matt. xxvii. 46.

They

They who ſtood by, miſtook the expreſſion; and while one ran to reach a ſponge-full of vinegar, at the end of a reed, to his mouth; another ſaid, Let him alone; let us ſee whether Elias will come to ſave him. 35. 36.

Jeſus crying out again in the ſame impaſſioned manner, expired: when inſtantly the veil of the temple, which ſeparated the Holy of Holies, was rent aſunder; indicating plainly, that all diſtinction between Jew, and Gentile was now aboliſhed. 37. 38.

Among other teſtimonies of the awful grandeur of this great event, that of the Roman centurion, who attended the execution, ſhould not be omitted. This officer, ſeeing the many ſolemn, and ſupernatural circumſtances, which accompanied the death of Jeſus, could not help crying out, Certainly this perſon was the offspring of ſome God. 39.

A few of Jeſus's diſciples, and of thoſe, who were attached to him, were preſent at this mournful ſcene. Some pious woman alſo, who had followed him from Galilee, ſtood at a diſtance. 40. 41.

But among thoſe, who thought themſelves moſt concerned, on this ſolemn occaſion, was Joſeph of Arimathea, a man of fortune, and conſequence, and greatly attached to Jeſus. This pious perſon, as the evening drew on, and as the next day was the ſabbath, when nothing could be done, went boldly to Pilate, and begged the body of Jeſus. 42. 43.

Pilate ſcarce conceiving, that he could be dead, made himſelf ſure of that point from the centurion, who attended the execution; and then granted the requeſt. 44. 45.

Joſeph taking the body from the croſs, wrapped it in fine linen, and depoſited it in a new tomb, which he had hewn in a rock; and

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39. See a note on the parallel paſſage of St. Matthew.

fixed a large ſtone, before the door of the ſepulchre, to which it had been fitted.

CHAP. XVI.

1. 2. The day after the ſabbath, very early in the morning, Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, brought ſpices
3. 4. to embalm the body. In the way, they conſulted how they ſhould remove the large ſtone, which cloſed the ſepulchre. But on coming to the place, they found, to their great aſtoniſhment, that it was
5. removed. They then entered the ſepulchre; and to their ſtill greater
6. aſtoniſhment, ſaw an angel ſitting in ſplendid array. As they retreated through fear, the angel thus accoſted them. Be not afraid. I know your errand; you ſeek your crucified Saviour. He is not here. He is riſen from the dead. See the place where his body lay.
7. ——And now go, tell his diſciples to meet him in Galilee, as he formerly ordered them.

8. On this the women leaving the ſepulchre in great confuſion,
9. and agitation of paſſions, were met by Jeſus, who firſt diſcovered
10. 11. himſelf to Mary Magdalen. She immediately ran to his diſciples, whom ſhe found in ſorrow, and great dejection; and endeavoured to animate them with the joyful news of Jeſus's reſurrection. But they gave little credit to her ſtory.

12. 13. After that, Jeſus appeared to two of the diſciples themſelves, as they walked into the country. They likewiſe informed the reſt of their brethren; but were equally diſcredited.

14. Soon afterwards he appeared again to all the eleven diſciples aſſembled together; and gently chid their unbelief in a matter, of which he had ſo often ſpoken to them; and which had been ſo well atteſted by eye-witneſſes.

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7. In the text it is, *tell his diſciples and Peter.* The particular mention of that apoſtle was probably to ſhew him, that notwithſtanding his denial of Chriſt, his repentance had reſtored him.

Jeſus

Jeſus then gave them their laſt inſtructions. Go, ſaid he, and 15.
preach the goſpel, from henceforth, to all the world. They, who 16.
believe it's doctrines, and obey it's rules, ſhall be ſaved: but they,
who reject it's evidences, muſt take on themſelves the conſequence
of rejecting it's gracious offers: and that you may be the better 17. 18.
enabled to preach the goſpel, you ſhall be endued with the power of
working miracles.

After Jeſus had given them theſe inſtructions, he aſcended into 19.
heaven: and they, obedient to his word, went out, and every where 20.
preached the goſpel; and confirmed the truth of it by miracles

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19. It ſeems to have been neceſſary for the apoſtles to *ſee* our Saviour aſcend into heaven, that they might be proper witneſſes of his *aſcenſion*. To ſee him *alive* after his death, was evidence ſufficient of his reſurrection. Dr. Lardner, in apology for St. Matthew, and St. John, who have omitted mentioning the aſcenſion, ſays, its truth is included in the reſurrection: and, no doubt to the believer, it may be; but not to the gainſayer, who might deny the fact, and ſay, that Chriſt had only ſecreted himſelf. It appears to me therefore that if none of the evangeliſts had borne teſtimony to the aſcenſion of Chriſt, it would have been a great deſideratum in the ſacred hiſtory; and I was rather ſurprized at finding ſo judicious a critic as Dr. Lardner laying ſo little ſtreſs on the mention of this circumſtance. See his letter to Mr. La Roche, in the appendix to his life by Dr. Kippis.

END OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
ST. MARK.

PREFACE

TO

ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL.

AFTER St. Matthew's gospel, which gives us the clearest, and fullest account of the life, and doctrine of our blessed Saviour, we have St. Mark's; which adds a few circumstances to the sacred story; but is chiefly valuable, as a confirmation of St. Matthew.

The next in order is St. Luke. This evangelist is supposed to be that Lucius, who is mentioned in the sixteenth chapter of Romans; again in the thirteenth, and eleventh of Acts; and again in the fourth of Colossians; where he is stiled a physician. Tho his name has rather a Gentile, than a Jewish sound; yet he is generally supposed to have been a Jew—at least a Jewish believer. As to a common opinion of his having been a painter, there seems not to be the least foundation for it in antiquity.

From the pen of this evangelist we have a rich accession to the sacred story. The history of the birth of John the baptist—several particulars relating to the birth of our Saviour—the parable of the good Samaritan—of the prodigal son—of Dives, and Lazarus—of the wicked judge—of the Pharisee, and publican—the account of the ten lepers—of Zaccheus—of the penitent thief—of the journey to Emmaus—and many other particulars of less moment, are all recorded solely by St. Luke. He had his intelligence, as he himself tells us, from different witnesses; and had before him therefore a large field of information.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

PREFACE, 149——Circumſtances previous to the birth of John, 150——and to the birth of Chriſt, 152——Mary's viſit to Elizabeth, 152——Birth of John, 153——his manner of life, 154——Birth of Chriſt, 156——Publication of it to the ſhepherds, 156——Circumciſion of Jeſus; and the prophecies of Simeon, and Anna, 157——Jeſus is found in the temple among the doctors, 158——John begins his miniſtry, 160——reproves Herod, 161——baptizes Jeſus, 162——Jeſus's temptation, 163——Jeſus begins his miniſtry, 164——his treatment at Nazareth, 164——heals a demoniac at Capernaum, 166——heals Peter's mother-in-law, 166——and many others, 167——goes into Galilèe, 167——teaches the people from a boat, 167——The miraculous draught of fiſh, and the calling of four diſciples, 168——Jeſus heals a leper, 168——heals a paralytic; and gives offence to the Phariſees, 169——calls Matthew; and gives new offence to the Phariſees at the houſe of that diſciple, 170——Offence given by the diſciples in paſſing through the cornfields, 171——and likewiſe by healing a withered hand, 171——Jeſus chuſes twelve apoſtles, 172——his ſermon, 173——heals a centurion's ſervant, 175——raiſes the widow's ſon at Nain, 176——John's meſſage to Jeſus; and Jeſus's opinion of John, 176——Simon's ſupper, 177——The parable of the ſower, 179——Jeſus points out his ſpiritual connections, as thoſe which were neareſt to him, 180——ſtills a ſtorm, 180——heals the demoniac at Gadara, 181——raiſes from the dead the ruler of the ſynagogue's daughter; and heals the woman with a bloody flux, 182——ſends out the twelve apoſtles to preach, 183——Herod's perplexity about Jeſus, 183——Jeſus feeds a multitude, 184——mentions his ſufferings to his diſciples, 184——is transfigured, 185——heals a demoniac, 186——warns his diſciples again of his ſufferings, and inſtructs them

them in humility, 186——repreſſes their zeal in deſiring to puniſh a Samaritan city, 187——diſcovers the falſe pretences of ſome, who offered to attend him, 187——inſtructs the ſeventy diſciples and ſends them to preach the goſpel, 188——The parable of the good Samaritan, 191——Martha and Mary, 192——On the duty of prayer, 192——Jeſus checks the malice of the Scribes, and Phariſees on their aſcribing his miracles to a confederacy with the devil, and on their demanding a ſign from heaven, 193——he inſtructs his diſciples, and the people in the duty of perſevering in religion; and againſt worldly-mindedneſs; and informs them of the many temporal calamities, which the goſpel will inevitably bring upon it's profeſſors, 197——he forbids raſh judgments, and injoins his hearers to bring their cenſures rather home to themſelves, 201——rebukes the ruler of a ſynagogue for finding fault with his healing on the ſabbath, 202——checks vain curioſity; and exhorts to enter the ſtrait gate, 203——laments over Jeruſalem, 204——heals a man of a dropſy; his inſtructions on chriſtian charity at the table of a Phariſee, 204——inſtructs the people in the nature of the goſpel-diſpenſation; ſhews why he did not refrain from the company of ſinners; ſhews the ſtate of the Jews and Gentiles in the parable of the prodigal ſon, 206——and that the things of this world ſhould be ſubſervient to the next, in the parables of the unjuſt ſteward, and of the rich man and Lazarus, 209——Of giving, and taking offence, 212——Of faith and humility, 213——Jeſus heals the ten lepers, 213——Of the coming of Chriſt's kingdom; Of prayer, and humility, 214——Children, emblems of chriſtian innocence, 217——Jeſus inſtructs his diſciples in the duty of relinquiſhing the world for the goſpel; and prepares them for his approaching ſufferings, 217——reſtores a blind man, 218——Story of Zaccheus, 219——The nature of Chriſt's kingdom; the parable of the king, and his ſervants, 219——Jeſus laments over Jeruſalem, as he enters it, and propheſies it's deſtruction, 221——turns out the buyers, and ſellers, 222——reproves the malice of the Phariſees, and Sadducees. The parable of the huſbandman and vineyard. Tribute to Cæſar. Queſtion of the Sadducees about the reſurrection. Whether Chriſt was David's ſon, 222——The widow's mite, 225——Jeſus diſcourſes on the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and the conſummation of all things, 226——The chief prieſts conſpire againſt him,

227——The paſſover, and laſt ſupper, with other circumſtances which happened at that time, 228——Jeſus's agony on the mount of Olives, 230——he is ſeized and carried before the high-prieſt, 231——Peter's denial, 231——Jeſus examined before the high-prieſt, 232——tried, and condemned by Pilate, 232——Circumſtances of his death, 234——his burial, 236——Circumſtances of his reſurrection, 237——and of his aſcenſion, 240.

St. LUKE.

CHAP. I.

AS many have written accounts of the life and death of Jesus Christ, on which the Christian builds his faith; I thought it right, my respected Theophilus, to draw up my account also of these things. I have had so perfect an information on this subject,

1. 2.
3.
4.

3. It is not well decided, whether *Theophilus* is a real person, or a feigned one. The title of *excellent* implies the former: the *name*, which may suit any religious person, implies the latter.

3. St. Luke tells us, he wrote *from the information of others*; which is a strong argument against those, who contend, that the apostles, and evangelists wrote every article under immediate inspiration. Things, which they relate as eye-witnesses, or from proper attestation, certainly required no inspiration.—See more on this point, in the general preface.

4. St. Luke speaks here of several gospels, which had been written in his days; and tho the *particulars* of what he says, rather incline us to think favourably of those gospels; yet his *general sense* gives us an unfavourable idea of them. For if so *many gospels*, in those days, had been written *faithfully*, what occasion was there for St. Luke to write another? None of the ancients, nor any good interpreters, suppose, he means St. Matthew's gospel, or St. Mark's; neither of which, it is probable, was written at that time: and if they were, it is very improbable, that he had seen them.——The evangelist says, he writes *in order*; from which some harmonizers, particularly Le Clerk, have taken it for granted, that he is more exact, in point of time, than any of the evangelists; and have reduced the chronology of the other gospels to the chronology of St. Luke. But other critics are of a different opinion; and conceive, that St. Luke had no intention to testify his *particular exactness in point of time:* but only that *he would relate events in the order, in which he had received them.* In general, it is supposed, that in

ject, that I am inabled to aſſure you, and all other Chriſtians, of the truth of that religion, in which you have been inſtructed.

5. 6. In the days of Herod, king of Judea, lived a prieſt, called Zacharias; who, with his wife Elizabeth, were eminent examples
7. of piety. They were both far advanced in years; and had no children.

8. 9. As this holy prieſt, according to the order of his courſe, was
10. offering incenſe in the ſanctuary, while the people were praying
11. without, an angel appeared to him, ſtanding on the right ſide of
12. the altar. Zacharias was ſurprized at the viſion: but the angel
13. repreſſing his fears, told him, that his prayers were heard——that God, in his own time, would grant him a ſon——that his name
14. ſhould be John——that he ſhould be the ſource of great joy to all
15. nations——that he ſhould live with the auſterity of a Nazarite;
16. and act under the influence of the holy ſpirit of God——that he

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in ſtrict chronology he is even the leaſt exact of any of the evangeliſts. He tells us, that he mentions ſuch facts, as were delivered to him by thoſe, who, *from the beginning were eye-witneſſes*. As he himſelf therefore was *not an eye-witneſs* of the things he records, but had his accounts from different people; we may ſuppoſe, he could not be ſo exact in combining facts, as St. Matthew, who had been an eye-witneſs of them himſelf. Grotius indeed ſays, that, in omni hac hiſtoria, Lucam ad rerum, magis, quam ad temporum ordinem attendere: (ſee his note on cap. iv. 21.) by which, I ſuppoſe, he means, that St. Luke puts facts together in ſuch a way, as to make them illuſtrate each other.

8. See an account of the ſeveral orders of prieſts 1 Chron. xxiv. 10.

10 There is ſomething beautiful, and poetical in that part of the Jewiſh ceremonial, which ſuppoſes the prayers of devout worſhippers to be wafted to heaven in odoriferous wreaths of incenſe. David adopts the idea; *my prayer is ſet forth as the incenſe*.

13. It is well known, how much the Jews always wiſhed for offſpring, in hopes of giving birth to the Meſſiah.

14. A name which ſignifies the *mercy of God*; or (as Biſhop Pearce thinks) *joy and gladneſs*.

ſhould

ſhould call the children of Iſrael to repentance——and, in the power 17.
of Elijah, ſhould prepare the world for the reception of the Meſſiah.

Zacharias recovering from his ſurprize; was at firſt, ſtruck with 18.
the improbability of the thing, on account of the very advanced age, both of himſelf, and his wife; and aſked the angel, By what ſign, he ſhould know the truth of this gracious meſſage?

The angel told him, that his name was Gabriel; and that the 19.
very appearance of ſuch a heavenly meſſenger was ſign ſufficient: but that, as he wanted a farther ſign, he ſhould have one, which 20.
ſhould alſo be the puniſhment of his unbelief. You ſhall be dumb, ſaid the angel, till this event be fulfilled.

During this interview, a much longer time had elapſed, than 21.
ſeemed neceſſary for Zacharias's ſtay in the ſanctuary; at which the people were not a little ſurprized. But when he came out 22.
of the temple, they ſoon found, he had ſeen a viſion, from thoſe dumb actions, which ſufficiently explained his meaning.

Notwithſtanding this viſitation, Zacharias continued to perform 23.
the functions of his office at Jeruſalem, till the time of his adminiſtration was ended. He then retired to his houſe in the 24, 25.

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17. *To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.* This is a difficult paſſage. Biſhop Pearce, and other commentators, conſider Chriſt as the *child*, to whom the fathers ſhould be turned. I own I think this a forced interpretation. The fact is, the words of Malachi (iv. 6.) are not quoted here; but only alluded to. In Malachi the ſenſe is fuller: *He ſhall turn the heart of the fathers to the children; and the heart of the children to their fathers*; which, in my opinion, means only to expreſs that general philanthropy, which the Chriſtian religion was intended to introduce; and which the prophet Iſaiah characterizes by thoſe pathetic images of *the lion and the lamb lying down together*, &c.—I think it remarkable, tho I never ſaw it remarked, that the bible ſhould conclude, as it does in this paſſage of Malachi, with ſuch a noble prophecy of the advent of the Meſſiah. *Behold I will ſend you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he ſhall turn the heart of the fathers to the children; and the heart of the children to their fathers; leſt I come, and ſmite the earth with a curſe:* that is, leſt I execute the great curſe, of which you read in the beginning of Geneſis. Thus the beginning, and the end of the bible are brought to one great point.

country

country with his wife; who ſequeſtring herſelf from the world, ſpent her time in praiſing God for his wonderful mercies to her.

26. 27. About ſix months after this event, the angel Gabriel was ſent to Nazareth, a city of Galilee, to a virgin of the name of Mary; who was eſpouſed to Joſeph, a perſon of low ſtation, tho immediately deſcended from the houſe of David. To this holy virgin the angel appearing, pronounced her bleſſed among women; and ſoon eaſed her apprehenſion on ſo wonderful an interview, by telling her, that ſhe was highly favoured in the ſight of God; who had appointed her to be the inſtrument, in a miraculous manner, of bringing the Meſſiah into the world.

28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35.

36. The angel then, as a confirmation of the truth of this great event, informed her of the miraculous circumſtances, in which her couſin Elizabeth was then rejoicing; adding, that events, which men call miraculous, were as eaſy to God, as the moſt ordinary effects of his power.

37.

38. Mary with great humility, received this divine ſalutation; praying, that God would make her worthy of the favours he had beſtowed.

39. 40. After this wonderful information, her firſt care was, to impart the circumſtances of it to her couſin Elizabeth, who was ſo greatly concerned in them. Accordingly ſhe took a journey to the mountainous country, where Zacharias dwelt.

41. On their firſt interview, it pleaſed God, to give all theſe holy perſons, in a ſingular manner, a new conviction of the truth of his

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39. I ſhould rather ſuppoſe this to have been her errand, than to prove the truth of the angel's veracity.

39. If Zacharias dwelt at Hebron, as is ſuppoſed, the length of the journey was about one hundred and twenty miles. See Well's geography.

promiſes.

promiſes. Mary had no ſooner ſaluted Elizabeth, and told her errand, than the child, with which Elizabeth was now pregnant, ſeemed to leap for joy. On this, as if the whole truth had burſt 42.
upon that holy woman at once, ſhe cried out, in the ſpirit of God:

" Bleſſed art thou among women; and bleſſed the holy child
" thou haſt conceived. With what humble thankfulneſs ſhould 43.
" I receive this viſit from the mother of the Meſſiah! Even the 44.
" very babe within me leapt for joy. Bleſſed art thou, who 45.
" haſt believed theſe glad tidings; for every thing that the Lord hath
" ſpoken, ſhall come to paſs."

Mary alſo, ſeized with the ſame divine enthuſiaſm, thus uttered 46. 47.
her joy:

" Praiſed, praiſed be the Lord for all his goodneſs! My humble 48.
" ſtate prevents not his making me the inſtrument of happineſs
" to all generations. It is the Almighty, who hath done this. 49.
" To him alone our praiſe is due. His mercy reſts on them that 50. 51. 52.
" fear him; however humble their ſtations are: while pride, how- 53.
" ever exalted, ſhall be brought low.——Thus hath he treated 54. 55.
" his holy people: and thus, in remembrance of his promiſe to
" Abraham, will he ever treat them."

After the departure of Mary, who prolonged her viſit about 56. 57.
three months, Elizabeth was delivered of a ſon; and all her re- 58.
lations came to rejoice with her on ſo wonderful a birth.

On the eighth day the child was circumciſed; and named Za- 59.
charias after his father. But Elizabeth oppoſing it, they applied 60. 61. 62.
to Zacharias himſelf; who calling for a writing-table, wrote on 63.
it, that his name ſhould be John: at which they, ignorant of the
reaſon, were greatly ſurprized.

64. Soon after, the happineſs of this pious family was compleated by the reſtoration of Zacharias to the uſe of his ſpeech; which he immediately employed in bleſſing and praiſing God.

65. In the mean time, the fame of theſe wonderful events was ſpread through the whole country; and ſtruck all who heard them, with
66. fear and reverence. Every one concluded, that a child thus born, muſt be intended to fulfill ſome wonderful purpoſe of God.

67. In the foreſight of this, Zacharias compoſed the following hymn.

68. " Bleſſed be the God of Iſrael, who hath at length viſited his
69. 70. " people; and raiſed up that ſalvation in the houſe of David,
" which all his holy prophets from the beginning of time, have
71. 72. 73. " foretold. The covenant, which he made with our fathers, the
74. 75. " oath, which he ſwore unto Abraham, are now compleated in
" our deliverance from our ſpiritual enemies; that we may ſerve
" God without fear, in righteouſneſs, and holineſs of life. And
76. " thou child art deſtined by God to be the forerunner of this great
77. 78. " event—to prepare the way for that mighty Saviour; who through
" the mercy, and free grace of God, will give ſalvation to his
79. " people by the remiſſion of their ſins—will guide them into the
" paths of eternal peace—and extend this mercy to all, who yet
" ſit in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death."

80. Such was the holy joy, and religious thankfulneſs, which ran through every branch of this pious family.

In the mean time, as the child advanced in years, he advanced alſo in the favour of God: and when he came to the uſe of his

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79. It is evident from this whole hymn, but eſpecially from the concluſion of it, that Zacharias was not miſled, as his countrymen commonly were, by the notion of a worldly deliverance; but had a perfect idea of the nature of the Meſſiah's kingdom.

own

own judgment, he retired into the wilderneſs; where he led a ſevere life of abſtinence, meditation, and prayer; till the time appointed, arrived, when he was to take upon him his public miniſtry.

CHAP. II.

About the time of John's birth, Auguſtus Cæſar had ordered the country of Judæa to be inrolled by Quirinius. In conſequence of this order, every one went to his family-town to be regiſtred among his anceſtors. And Bethlehem being the family-town of Joſeph, and Mary, who was now far advanced in her pregnancy, they were both at this time, under the neceſſity of taking a journey thither.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

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1. The word οικουμενη often means only Judea.

1. This inrolling was a preamble to a general tax; which Auguſtus ſeems to have kept hanging over the head of Herod, with whom he was much diſpleaſed. Herod, by embaſſies, and evaſions, got the tax put off from time to time: but the inrolment went on.

2. Few paſſages in the New Teſtament have given more employment to the critical abilities of learned men, than the inrolment here mentioned by Quirinius. It ſeems to contradict, in point of time, the evidence of prophane hiſtorians; particularly of Joſephus. Dr. Lardner, in the firſt vol. of his Credibility, hath employed many more pages to ſettle this point, than St. Luke's whole goſpel contains. He examines with great erudition, and patience, the opinion of learned men on the ſubject; and ſettles it, that there were two inrolments made by Quirinius; and tranſlates the ſecond verſe thus, *This was the firſt inrolment made by Quirinius, governor of Syria.*

4. There is a difficulty, which hath already been mentioned, in the two genealogies given us by St. Matthew, and St. Luke; both of which appear to belong to Joſeph.——This verſe furniſhes one ſolution of the difficulty; and not a bad one. If Mary had been conſidered only as Joſeph's wife, ſhe had no occaſion to go to Bethlehem. *His* going would have been ſufficient: and we can hardly ſuppoſe, that in the ſituation, in which ſhe then was, he would have taken her. From *her* going therefore we are led to ſuppoſe, that *ſhe* was under the *neceſſity* of going likewiſe. This would have been the caſe, if her father had been dead, without male-iſſue. She would then have been the repreſentative of her family.—In that caſe alſo, ſhe muſt by the Jewiſh law have married a kinſman. Joſeph's family and hers therefore would be the *ſame*; and one pedigree would include both. This ſeems very plauſible; but there are ſome, who ſuppoſe this inrolment was made according to the Roman cuſtoms, by which women, as well as men were inrolled.

6. Thus through Cæſar's order for the inrolment of Judæa, was brought about the birth of Chriſt at Bethlehem; according to the
7. prophecy of Micah; for here the holy virgin was delivered. As Bethlehem was neceſſarily at that time crouded, the conveniences, of courſe were ſmall. The gueſt-chamber in the houſe, where Joſeph, and ſhe lodged, being engaged, they were obliged to take what accomodations they could have in an out-houſe, where cattle were commonly kept. Here Jeſus Chriſt was born; and laid in a manger.

8. 9. The firſt publication of this great event was in the ſame ſtile of ſimplicity.

As a company of ſhepherds, near Bethlehem, were watching their flocks by night, a ſudden illumination ſpread round them; in the midſt of which an angelic form appeared; and inſtantly diſpelled their fears by accents of joy.

10. " Fear not, ſaid he, I bring glad tidings, not only to you, but
11. " to all people. This day is born in the city of David, a Saviour,
12. " which is Chriſt the Lord. As a ſign, you ſhall find the holy " babe wrapped in ſwaddling cloaths, and lying in a manger."

13. As the angel ſpoke, the ſplendid light, which incompaſſed the place, appeared ſuddenly peopled with a number of the heavenly hoſt, who thus joined in a ſong of praiſe.

14. " Glory be to God in the higheſt; and on earth peace, and good " will to man."

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6. Chap. v. 2.

7. The word καταλυμα, which is here tranſlated *an inn*, is in Luke xxii. 11. and in Mark xiv. 14. tranſlated *a gueſt-chamber*, and an *upper-room*; either of which is a better word here.

9. This illumination, was the *Sheckinah*, or divine light, which the Jews always underſtood to be *the ſign of God's authority*; whether they heard a voice alone, or ſaw a form. This idea was very familiar in the early parts of the Jewiſh hiſtory.

As

As ſoon as this glorious viſion diſappeared, the ſhepherds, in obe- 15. 16. 17.
dience to it, went immediately to Bethlehem; where they found 18. 19. 20.
every thing, as the angel had deſcribed. Then returning with joy, they related publicly all the wonderful circumſtances, they had ſeen. ——From all theſe things the people in general expected ſome great event to follow; tho they knew not what; but Mary laid them all up with holy faith, in her heart; and ſaw more and more, the gracious promiſes of God taking effect.

On the eighth day the child was circumciſed, and called Jeſus, 21.
according to the directions, which the angel had left with Mary: and ſoon after, on the occaſion of her purification, he was carried 22. 23. 24.
to Jeruſalem, to be preſented, as a firſt-born, to the Lord, when the proper legal ſacrifice was offered.

There dwelt, at that time, in Jeruſalem, a man of very eminent 25.
piety, whoſe name was Simeon. This devout perſon having long waited with holy faith to ſee the completion of the promiſes of God, 26.
had a revelation from heaven, that he ſhould not die, till he had ſeen the Meſſiah; and being directed by the ſpirit of God to enter the 27.
temple at the time, when Jeſus was brought there; as ſoon as the ceremony was over, he took the bleſſed child into his arms, and thus 28.
ſpoke:

" Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, according 29.
" to thy promiſe. Mine eyes have now ſeen thy ſalvation; which 30. 31.
" is preparing to ſpread joy through all nations—the glory of Iſrael; 32.
" and the light of the Gentiles."

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24. See Exod. xiii. 2.

Theſe

33. Theſe things contributed, more, and more, to raiſe the joy, and expectation of the holy parents.

34. 35. Simeon bleſſed *them* alſo; and turning to Mary; This child, ſaid he, ſhall make the great ſeparation between good and bad. His doctrines ſhall be the teſt of man's ſincerity. In the mean time, ſuch will be the oppoſition againſt him, that I caution you, and all his followers, not to expect a time of earthly felicity; but a time of violence, and perſecution.

36. 37. Another holy perſon likewiſe, at that time, dwelt in Jeruſalem, whoſe name was Anna. She had from an early period of her life been left a widow; and was now advanced to a very great age. She had ever been devoted to the ſervice of God; and was now favoured, as Simeon alſo was, with the ſpirit of prophecy.

38. This pious woman coming into the temple, when Jeſus was there, was ſeized with a divine impulſe—gave thanks to God for this great completion of all his promiſes—and explained to the devout perſons then preſent, the nature of the Meſſiah's kingdom, which was about to be eſtabliſhed.

39. Joſeph and Mary having now performed all the ceremonies, which
40. the law required, returned to Nazareth with Jeſus; who increaſed in wiſdom, as he increaſed in age; and ſoon began to ſhew the effects of the divine grace upon him.

41. 42. When he was about twelve years old, his parents took him with them again to Jeruſalem to attend the paſſover; which they them-
43. 44. ſelves conſtantly attended. On their return, they miſſed him; but as there was a great company of their relations, and acquaintances going

going on before, they concluded he was among them; and without farther ſolicitude continued their journey. But in the evening finding 45.
this was not the caſe, they returned to Jeruſalem in great diſtreſs, and ſought him in all parts of the city On the third day they found 46.
him in one of the ſchools of the temple, liſtening to the doctors, as they expounded the law; and aſking ſuch queſtions, as ſhewed a 47.
wiſdom, which filled every one preſent with aſtoniſhment. His 48.
parents were ſurprized at finding him there: and his mother could not forbear aſking him, Why he had been ſo inobſervant of them, and had occaſioned them ſo long, and ſorrowful a ſearch? Jeſus anſwered, How is it, that you ſought me? Knew you not, that I 49.
muſt be about my father's buſineſs?

Tho they were far from clearly underſtanding what he ſaid, yet 50. 51.
Mary laid up this ſpeech in her memory, among the various other notices, ſhe had received of the great deſigns, which God intended to bring about through her ſon.

After this, Jeſus returned with his parents to Nazareth, and continued with them, till he entered on his miniſtry; increaſing in grace, 52.
and favour with God, and man.

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46. It is not probable they ſought him three days in Jeruſalem: but that they found him on the third day after they had miſſed him. Two days had already been ſpent in journeying, and returning.——Our bleſſed Saviour is often *repreſented* on this occaſion, as *ſitting among the doctors*, and diſputing with them; but the text implies nothing more, than his ſitting, as was injoined to learners, *at their feet*.—The aſſembly of doctors here mentioned, was probably one of thoſe ſchools, where youth were examined, as was uſual, with regard to their proficiency in the law.

49. Dr. Doddridge, from this verſe, takes occaſion to make a very affectionate addreſs to his younger brethren of the miniſtry; whom he exhorts not to give up their time chiefly to the curioſities of learning; much leſs to amuſements; but to attend to their principal function; leſt in their laſt moments, they may ſee reaſon to adopt the dying words of one of the greateſt ſcholars of his time; Proh! vitam perdidi, operoſe nihil agendo; *I have ſpent my life, in being at infinite pains to do nothing*.

Such

CHAP. III.

1. 2. 3. Such was the birth, and early youth of these two great personages, so nearly connected with each other; John the baptist, and Jesus Christ. They were born in the fortieth year of Augustus Cæsar; but it was not till the fifteenth of Tiberius, the succeeding emperor, that they entered upon their public ministry.

At that time, by the express command of God, John was ordered to preach repentance to the people, and prepare them for the gospel;
4. 5. 6. agreeably to the prophecy of Isaiah, *The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain, and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight; and the rough way shall be made smooth: and all mankind shall see the salvation of God.*

7. In preaching to the people, John inveighed severely against sin,
8. and the consequences of it——he explained to them the nature, and end of true repentance——he told them, that all the peculiar privileges, of which the Jews boasted, were now at an end——that God meant to raise up children to Abraham from all mankind——

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1. The date is ascertained in the text by the mention of the chief magistrates then presiding. Learned men have found great difficulty with regard to the fifteenth year of Tiberius. The point is discussed at large at the end of the first volume of Lardner's Credibility.—It is observable, that the names of two high priests are mentioned. The case was, that after the dominion of the Romans, great confusion was introduced into the high-priesthood.——One thing with regard to the date is rather remarkable; which is, that some learned men have calculated, that, if the Jews had continued to observe their years of jubilee, the fifteenth year of Tiberius would have fallen in with the last of them. This is an argument (if it can be proved) of some use against the Jews, who say, the Messiah will appear in the last jubilee. Within the succeeding fifty years, the city and government were destroyed. Bausobre's Introd.

8. See this idea explained Rom. iv.

that

that the time of this great diſpenſation was now approaching; and 9.
that men ought well to conſider the riſk they ran in deſpiſing this laſt great offer of God's mercy.

Such was the general ſubject of John's exhortations. And when 10. 11.
many well-diſpoſed people aſked him, What they ſhould do? He particularly recommended to them acts of charity, and mercy. People alſo of different profeſſions, publicans, and ſoldiers, repent- 12. 13. 14.
ing of their ſins, and coming to his baptiſm, deſired his inſtruction. To all of them he recommended an exact attention to thoſe duties, which their ſeveral employments led them moſt to tranſgreſs.

The gravity, and authority of John's preaching occaſioned a ge- 15.
neral ſuſpence in the minds of men; and moſt people were inclined to think him the Meſſiah. But John, with great warmth, checked 16.
all ſuppoſitions of that kind. I baptize you, ſaid he, only with water: but that great perſon, for whom I am not worthy to perform the meaneſt offices, will baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt. 17.
I only *preach* to you; but his ſuperior office will be to *try the hearts* of men; and make the *final ſeparation* between good and bad.

This was John's uſual manner of addreſſing himſelf to the people: 18.
but thinking it his duty to exerciſe a freer kind of exhortation, on 19.
proper occaſions, he ventured even to reprove Herod for his inceſtuous life. That prince however unable to bear ſo free an adviſer, 20.
added to his other crimes the impriſonment of John.

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14. *Do violence to no man; neither accuſe any falſly.* Put no man in fear in order to raiſe money; nor, as *delatores* (which were common among the Roman ſoldiery,) carry up falſe accuſations to your ſuperiors.

21. 22. But before that event took place, Jesus himself came, among others, to his baptism. In the midst of the devotion, which attended that ceremony, it pleased God to give an awful testimony of the *divinity* of Jesus. The clouds opened; and a splendid light rested upon him; from which a voice proclaimed, Thou art my
23—38. beloved son: in thee I am well pleased.——But with regard to his *earthly*

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21. Read τȣ Ιησȣ, with the article. When one observes a thing regularly done above six hundred times, as Ιησȣ; with the article, and finds it omitted, under the same circumstances, not above twenty times, one may fairly suppose a mistake in transcribing. Ιησȣ;, without the article, is *one Jesus, any Jesus*. With the article it means *the Jesus*, of whom this history is written.

22. See a note on Matt. iii. 16.

23. Some critics suppose, that the pedigree of Jesus inserted here, was Mary's pedigree, and not Joseph's. Joseph, who is here called the son of Heli, is called in St. Matthew the son of Jacob. This difference they accommodate by an easy parenthesis in St. Luke's text; ων (ως ενομιζετο υιος Ιωσηφ) τȣ Ηλι: *being (tho supposed to be the son of Joseph) the son, or immediate male-descendant, from Heli.* This sense also the Talmud strengthens by calling Mary, the daughter of Heli.

Some again suppose, that St. Matthew gives the *real progenitors* of Joseph; and St. Luke *David's heirs* through another channel. He omits Solomon, and takes Nathan: but in Salathiel both their genealogies unite. Other differences may be reconciled in the same way.

The Jewish mode of reckoning descents may also greatly assist us in reconciling the differences between St. Matthew, and St. Luke. The Israelitish family was sometimes registered according to *nature*, and sometimes according to *law*, when the brother raised up seed to the brother. See Lardner's Credibil. Part II. ch. xxxvii.

Other solutions have already been given of the difficulties occasioned by these two genealogies. We may suppose the prophecy of Jesus's springing from the house of David to be fulfilled by his being the *reputed*, or *legal* son of Joseph. See a note on Matt. i. 1.—Or we may suppose, that Joseph, and Mary were both of the *same* family, and had therefore the same pedigree. See a note on Luke ii. 6.

After all, tho there may be some obscurity with regard to these two genealogies at this late day, it is impossible to conceive the evangelists would have inserted them, if they had not known them at their time to be universally acknowledged. They carry the evidence of their authenticity along with them. Genealogies were publickly recorded, and easily compared. Whatever difficulty therefore may arise at this day, it is very plain there was none of early date: for among all the objections against Jesus as the Messiah, made by his countrymen, that of his not springing from the house of David, as far as I recollect, was never made.

It

earthly parentage, he ſprang in a direct line from David; and was at this time about thirty years of age.

CHAP. IV.

After his baptiſm, Jeſus prepared himſelf for his miniſtry, by retiring, under the influence of the Holy Spirit into the wilderneſs. 1.
Here he ſpent forty days in faſting and prayer; and here the devil was permitted to tempt him. 2. 3.

The firſt temptation was addreſſed to the neceſſities of nature. If thou be the ſon of God, ſaid the devil, command this ſtone to be made bread.——Jeſus anſwered him from the words of Moſes, 4.
that the life of man was not ſo much ſuſtained by natural, as by ſpiritual food.——The devil's next temptation was addreſſed to the 5. 6. 7.
paſſions. See, ſaid he, from this lofty ſtand, all the glories of the world—it's power, riches, and pleaſures. All are mine; and ſhall be thine; if thou wilt devote thyſelf to me.——Jeſus anſwered, Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, *Thou* 8.
ſhalt worſhip the Lord, thy God; and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.——
The devil then diſplaying before him a ſcene like Jeruſalem, 9. 10. 11.
and ſetting him on one of the battlements of the temple, deſired

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It is ſuppoſed, that St. Luke's goſpel was written chiefly for the uſe of the Gentiles; and one argument is taken from this pedigree, which is carried up to Adam to ſhew that Chriſt was the *ſeed of the woman*; to which the promiſe was primarily annexed. The Jews, who reſted chiefly on their own prophets, were ſatisfied with deriving his pedigree from David.

23. *About thirty years of age.* Our Saviour, no doubt, was qualified, long before this time, to enter upon his office. Why he deferred it thus long, we can only conjecture. It might be by way of example to future miniſters; or, as this was the age, when the high-prieſt was allowed to enter upon his office, it might be with a view to fulfil that type more compleatly.

2. See the beginning of the fourth chapter of St. Matthew, together with the note.

2. *Being forty days tempted of the devil,* as our tranſlation improperly renders it. Place a comma after τεσσαρακοντα, and the ſenſe will be, *he was in the wilderneſs forty days, being tempted of the devil.*

8. Deut. vi. 6.

9. See a note on Matt. iv. 5.

him to give a proof of his being the ſon of God, by caſting himſelf down from thence, and truſting God for his deliverance.——Jeſus
12. anſwered him from ſcripture, *Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God*—thou ſhalt not try any unneceſſary experiments of God's
13. favour in thy preſervation.——The devil being thus diſappointed, left Jeſus at preſent, in hopes of finding ſome more favourable opportunity of prevailing.

14. 15. From the ſolitary regions of the wilderneſs, Jeſus returned into Galilee; and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, entered on his public miniſtry; preaching the goſpel, and confirming it with miracles; which ſoon ſpread his fame through the country.

16. Among other places he went to Nazareth, where he had ſpent his youth; and going, as he uſually did, to the ſynagogue on the

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12. The order of theſe temptations is different in St. Matthew, where they ſeem more naturally introduced. The laſt temptation, which St. Luke makes the ſecond, was ſo abominable in it's nature, that it ſeemed moſt likely to be that, which occaſioned Jeſus to drive the devil from him.——Milton however, in his *Paradiſe regained*, thought otherwiſe. He follows St. Luke's order; and makes the devil carry on a regular chain of temptation from the firſt attempt, to the laſt. As Jeſus had ſhewn no inclination to the worldly vanities, that had been ſet before him; Give then, ſaid the devil, a proof of your being the ſon of God: Stand on this *pinnacle* of the temple, &c. which *pinnacle* Milton conceives to be a ſmall pointed ſpire, on which no man could *ſtand* without a miracle. Jeſus's divine power was to be ſhewn as well in ſtanding on the pinnacle, as in throwing himſelf from it.——Tho, in my opinion, Milton ſhews himſelf to no great advantage in *detailing* theſe temptations, yet, it muſt be owned, he brings Jeſus off the pinnacle in a very noble manner.

——————————— Strait a fiery globe
Of angels, on full ſail of wing, drew nigh,
Who on their plumy vans received him ſoft
From his uneaſy ſtation, and upbore
As on a floating couch through the blithe air,
And in a flowery valley ſet him down.

16. *As his cuſtom was.* A ſtrong argument this to inforce the attendance on public worſhip.

ſabbath-

ſabbath-day, he ſtood up, as if intending to read, and expound the ſcripture. The prophecy of Iſaiah was put into his hands; which 17.
he opened in that place, where the prophet breaks out into the following paſſage:

" The ſpirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe he hath anointed 18. 19.
" me to preach the goſpel to the poor——he hath ſent me to heal
" the broken-hearted——to preach deliverance to the captives;
" and recovery of ſight to the blind——to ſet at liberty them that
" are bruiſed——to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

When Jeſus had read this paſſage he cloſed the book, and return- 20. 21. 22.
ing it to the miniſter, ſat down. The dignity, and grace of his behaviour made an impreſſion on all, who were in the ſynagogue: but they were much more impreſſed, when they heard him expound the paſſage; and aſſure them, it was, at that time, fulfilling.

But theſe ſentiments were only the firſt ſuggeſtions of candor. Their prejudices ſoon began to riſe. His being the carpenter's ſon was an offence, which they could not get over; and ſoon led them to negligence, and contempt.

You call upon me, ſaid Jeſus, to do mighty works among you: 23.
but you conſider not, that the diſpoſition of the perſon, on whom a miracle is wrought, muſt operate with the power of him, who works the miracle. Your prejudices againſt me, becauſe I am 24.
your countryman, have blinded your eyes, and indiſpoſed you to receive the truth. Many were the widows of Iſrael, during the 25. 26. 27.
famine in the days of Elijah; and many were the lepers of Iſrael

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17. *He opened the book:* that is, he *unfolded* it; for the Jewiſh books were written on long ſcrolls of parchment, folded over two rollers; one at each end. *Opening the book* therefore was unfolding one end, and folding the other.

19. Our Saviour plainly alludes to the year of Jubilee, the typical meaning of which he takes to himſelf. See a note on chap. lxi. of Lowth's Iſaiah, p. 260.

20. It was uſual to ſtand, when the ſcripture was *read*; but it was commonly *expounded* in a ſitting poſture.

in

in the days of Eliſha: but none of their own countrymen were relieved by thoſe prophets; while the mercy of God was extended to a widow of Sidon; and a leper of Syria. So ſhall it alſo be with you. Strangers and foreigners ſhall receive thoſe favours from God, of which you render yourſelves unworthy.

28. 29. This diſcourſe threw the whole ſynagogue into a rage; and a tumult immediately enſuing, they carried Jeſus to the precipice, on which the city was built, with an intention to throw him down:
30. but he miraculouſly avoided their malice, and left the place.

31. From Nazareth Jeſus went to Capernaum, where alſo he in-
32. ſtructed the people in the ſynagogue on the ſabbath. Here he was received in a different manner. The doctrine he taught; and the miracles by which he confirmed it, made a great impreſſion on many of the inhabitants of that town.

33. It happened, as he was one day teaching in their ſynagogue, that a perſon poſſeſſed with an evil ſpirit, being there, called out to
34. him, expreſſing his own terrors; and acknowledging the divine power of Jeſus.

35. Jeſus commanded the evil ſpirit to leave the man: on which he fell down convulſed, in the midſt of the congregation; and appeared as if dead. But he very ſoon recovered; and was perfectly
36. 37. reſtored.——This great miracle ſpread the fame of Jeſus, throughout all the country.

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30. We have very few inſtances of Jeſus's evading his enemies by a miracle: he generally did it by diſcrete, and prudent behaviour. See a note on Matt. xii. 16. Some think, among whom was Tertullian, that no miracle is here intended: but I ſee not how ſuch a tranſaction could happen without one.

34. Rather, *What haſt thou to do with us?*

From

From the ſynagogue Jeſus retired to Simon's houſe, whoſe mother-in-law was then lying ſick of a fever. Jeſus being informed of it, healed her ſo immediately, that ſhe was able to wait on them at ſupper. 38. 39.

On the fame of theſe miracles, numbers were brought to him, that evening, ſick of various diſeaſes; and ſeveral that were poſſeſſed with evil ſpirits. All of them were healed; and the evil ſpirits, who knew him, were not ſuffered to ſpeak. Such teſtimony he abhorred. 40. 41.

Early the next morning he retired to a deſert place. But the people diſcovering his retreat, crouded around him; and could ſcarce be perſuaded to ſuffer him to leave them; tho he told them he was under a neceſſity to preach the goſpel in other places. 42. 43.

From hence therefore he went into different parts of Galilee; where he preached ſometimes in the ſynagogues, and ſometimes in open places. 44.

CHAP. V.

As he was walking by the ſide of the lake of Tiberias, the people attended him in great numbers: and as he could not well be heard, while the croud was preſſing around him, he went into a boat, belonging to Simon; whom he deſired to puſh a little from the ſhore. In this commodious ſituation he taught the people. 1. 2. 3.

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41. See a note on Mark, i. 34.

41. This verſe does not ſeem to be properly rendered in our tranſlation. It ſhould be, *He ſuffered them not to declare,* (ὅτι) THAT *they knew him.*

Having

4. Having finiſhed his diſcourſe, he deſired Simon to row further
5. into the lake, and let down his net. Simon told him, he had been toiling all the night without effect; nevertheleſs, at his deſire,
6. he would make another attempt. To his great aſtoniſhment, the quantity of fiſhes he now incloſed, was ſo prodigious, that he
7. found his net unable to drag them on ſhore. He called therefore to his companions in another boat to aſſiſt him: and ſo amazing was the draught, that both the boats were compleatly filled.

8. 9. 10. Struck with this miracle, Simon fell down on his knees before Jeſus, and confeſſed his own unworthineſs. James alſo, and John, Simon's partners, were equally aſtoniſhed. Jeſus who had wrought the miracle to figure out Simon's future ſucceſs in preaching the goſpel, told him, that, from henceforward, he *ſhould catch men*. As
11. ſoon as they came to land, all the three forſook every thing they had, and followed Jeſus.

12. Accompanied by theſe diſciples he continued to preach the goſpel through Galilee.

In one of the towns of this diſtrict, a perſon greatly afflicted with the leproſy, came to him; and falling down before him, acknowledged his divine power, and begged his aſſiſtance. Jeſus laying his hand upon him, inſtantly healed him; and forbidding
13. 14. him to divulge the matter, ordered him to preſent himſelf to the prieſt; and on the certification of his cure, to offer the ſacrifice commanded by the law.

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10. This expreſſion is uſed both by St. Matt. (iv. 19.) and St. Mark (i. 17.) but neither of theſe paſſages conveys more, than the ſimple idea of *fiſhers of men*. But St. Luke's words (ανθρωπους εση ζωγρων) carry a more expreſſive idea: you *ſhall take them alive*——not with a deſign to kill them as you do fiſh, but to preſerve them.

The

The miracle however was ſoon known; and brought ſuch numbers about Jeſus, that he was obliged frequently to retire into ſolitary places, merely to find leiſure for prayer; and the common refreſhments of nature. 15. 16.

Some time after, as he was teaching in a houſe, where ſeveral of the Scribes, and Phariſees were preſent, who had come privately from Jeruſalem, and other places, to obſerve him; he wrought the following miracle. 17.

The friends of a certain paralytic, bringing the ſick man to him on a couch; and finding the door ſurrounded by ſuch a croud, as prevented their entrance, went round; and aſcending the roof, let him down on his bed before Jeſus. On ſuch an inſtance of faith, Jeſus told the man, his ſins were forgiven. This raiſed high offence among the Scribes, and Phariſees, who in their own minds charged him with blaſphemy. But Jeſus knowing their thoughts, aſked, Whether they thought it eaſier to forgive the man's ſins, or to heal his malady? That you may know, ſaid he, I can do the one, you ſhall ſee me perform the other. He then bad the man riſe, and take up his bed, and walk. On this he was inſtantly healed; and broke out in thankſgiving to God; in which the people univerſally joined him. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26.

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16. The words in the original, I think, imply, that it was his common practice to retire occaſionally from the croud to meditation, and devotion.

17. *The power of the Lord was preſent to heal them*; that is, to heal *the people*, not *the Scribes, and Phariſees*; as the grammatical conſtruction of the words import.

19. See a note on Mark ii. 4.

20. See a note on Matt. ix. 2.

20. How Chriſt, as a *mere man*, could take upon him to forgive ſin, is not eaſy, I think, to underſtand. Blaſphemous it certainly would have been, as the Scribes, and Phariſees conſidered it.

27. Soon after, as Jesus was walking into the country, he saw Levi,
a publican, collecting the Roman tribute; and calling him; Levi,
28. without the least hesitation, became his follower.

29. Jesus being afterwards invited to the house of his new disciple,
sat down to table with many people of loose characters, who had
been Levi's former acquaintances.

30. At this the Scribes, and Pharisees found new matter of offence:
How is it, said they to the disciples of Jesus, that your master
sits down to meat with publicans and sinners?

31. Jesus over-hearing them, desired to know, Whether the sick,
32. or the healthy, had more need of a physician? Or, in other
words, whether they thought his errand was, to call the righteous
man, or the sinner, to repentance?

33. Being silenced by this question, they asked another, on the same
subject. Whence is it, said they, that our disciples, and the dis-
ciples of John, are bound by rigid rules to fasting, and other au-
sterities, while yours are left much at liberty?

34. Jesus told them, it was not yet the season to put his disciples
35. on austerities. Would you have men fast, said he, at a marriage-
feast? My disciples shall have their time of trial, when I leave
36. 37. them. But a new patch does not suit worse with an old garment,
nor new wine with old bags, than rigid rules with young professors.
38. 39. Things must be accommodated to circumstances; and old preju-
dices cannot be broken at once.

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39. The difficulty of the passage lies in this. Old wine is generally esteemed more than new: but our Saviour, in this comparison, does not consider the *quality*, but the *age* of the wine.

On

On another occaſion, ſoon after, the ſame determined ſpirit of cavilling appeared again. On a ſabbath-day, Jeſus was paſſing through a corn-field; and his diſciples, being hungry, plucked the ears of corn, which they rubbed in their hands, and eat. This was obſerved by the Phariſees, who were greatly offended at ſuch a profanation of the ſabbath. Jeſus reminded them of the practice of David; aſking them, If they did not remember, how he had acted in a caſe of neceſſity? How he eat the ſhew-bread; and gave it to his followers; tho the law allowed it only to the prieſts?—Beſides, ſaid Jeſus, the ſon of man is Lord alſo of the ſabbath.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

On another ſabbath, as he was teaching in a ſynagogue, a man happened to be there, with a withered hand: and as Jeſus knew, that the Scribes and Phariſees were watching him, he ordered the man, before he healed him, to ſtand out in the middle of the ſynagogue. Then turning to the Phariſees, What think you, ſaid he, is the moſt acceptable ſervice to God, on the ſabbath-day? To do a good action, or a bad one? To ſave a life, or to practiſe againſt one?

6. 7. 8. 9.

No anſwer being returned, he looked at them with mingled ſorrow, and indignation; and bad the man ſtretch out his hand; which was inſtantly reſtored.

10.

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1. In the text the words are *the ſecond ſabbath after the firſt*. This is a difficult paſſage; tho not very intereſting. One explanation is, that the Jews obſerved with *peculiar attention* three ſabbaths in the year; one after each of their great feaſts—the paſſover—the pentecoſt, and the feaſt of tabernacles: ſo that *the ſecond ſabbath after the firſt*, was the middle ſabbath, or the ſabbath after the feaſt of pentecoſt.—Others ſay, it was the firſt ſabbath, after the ſecond day of the paſſover, from which day the ſeven weeks between the paſſover, and pentecoſt were reckoned. Theſe interpreters tranſlate St. Luke's word δευτεροπρωτος *the firſt after the ſecond*: πρωτος απο της δευτερας.—But there ſeems to be much uncertainty in theſe explications.

11. Full of rage at the detection of their guilt; and at their being unable to reply, the Pharisees left the place; and consulted how they
12. might take more effectual means to destroy Jesus.——He, in the mean time, retired to a solitary mountain, where he continued all night in a house of prayer.

13. The next day he chose twelve, whom he called apostles, from
14. such, as had been his constant followers. Their names were Simon, whom he surnamed Peter; and Andrew his brother; James; John;
15. 16. Philip; Bartholomew; Matthew; Thomas; James the son of Alpheus; Simon the Canaanite; Judas, the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot.

17. 18. 19. 20. From the mountain, where this transaction passed, Jesus came down into the plain where a great multitude of people were assembled,

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12. Our translation renders εν τη προσευχη τȣ Θεȣ *in prayer to God.* But it is very evident, that a *proseuche*, or *house of prayer*, is here meant. These houses were very frequent in the earlier parts of the Jewish history; and being often situated on mountains, and sheltered by trees, are supposed to be the *high places*, often mentioned, which were not always taken in a bad sense. In the later periods of the Jewish history, when synagogues became more in use, the *proseuche* was less frequented.

15. He is called in the text ζηλωτης or the zealot. Josephus speaks of the zealots in his time, as great pretenders to religion; and among the worst sort of people. But forty years before, when Simon was a zealot, we may suppose the name conveyed a different ieda.

17. St. Matthew expresly says, this discourse was held on *a mount*: St. Luke as expresly, that it was held *on a plain*. To settle this contradiction hath been matter of great difficulty. Grotius supposes, that St. Luke's τοπος πεδινȣ, was *a plain on the top of a mountain*. Dr. Clarke supposes, that Jesus returned again from the plain to the mountain. Others suppose the same discourse was held at different times. I own, I think it of little consequence; and that it may well be reckoned among those matters which have no kind of effect on the narration; and to which the evangelists themselves paid no attention.——If the *doctrine* be the same, as it certainly is, of what consequence is the *scene?* However, for the sake of those, who think it of importance, I shall venture to add my solution to that of others.

A passage.

bled, many from very diſtant parts, to hear his doctrine, and to be healed of various diſorders. After that benevolent work was effected, he delivered the following diſcourſe

Bleſſed are the meek, the modeſt, the humble, and lowly-minded —they who are above this world and it's enjoyments. Theſe alone are properly diſpoſed to receive my religion.

Bleſſed are they who ſuffer the evils of life, and the contempt of 21. 22. 23.
mankind, for the ſake of the goſpel—who, like the prophets of old, ſtood foremoſt in the defence of truth. Theſe ſhall ſecure their
future happineſs: while they, who have recourſe to the world for 24. 25. 26.
their joys, their pleaſures, and their comforts, like the falſe prophets of old, muſt expect from the world alſo their reward.

As it is not from the world that you are to ſeek for happineſs; ſo 27.
neither is it from the world, that your are to learn inſtruction. All
it's doctrines muſt be left behind. In oppoſition to them, in the 28.
firſt place love your enemies. Bleſs, when they curſe. Pray for
them, when they treat you ill. Never revenge an injury: ſuffer 29.
even a ſecond, and a third, rather than return a firſt.

Be readier to give, than to exact. Let your rule be, to do to 30. 31.
others, whatever in reaſon you could expect from them. For if you 32. 33. 34.
love, and aſſiſt them merely, who love and aſſiſt you; you do only
what a heathen himſelf would do. But if you would love, and 35.

A paſſage may be produced from Cæſar's commentaries, which I think, may throw ſome light upon it. Cæſar tells us, that when Arioviſtus, and he agreed on a conference, they choſe for that purpoſe a mount in the midſt of a plain. Planicies erat magna, et in ea tumulus terreus, ſatis grandis. On this *mount* the two chiefs held their conference; while the troops they brought with them, ſtood around them on the *plain*. If therefore we ſuppoſe the ſcene, where our Saviour held this divine diſcourſe, to be of the kind, which Cæſar deſcribes, and that *he* ſtood upon the mount, while the *people* occupied the plain, his diſcourſe may be ſtiled either *the ſermon on the mount*; or *the ſermon in the plain*.

35. Bowyer conjectures, that μηδὲν απελπιζοντες, ſhould be rendered, *in no wiſe deſpairing*: but I like the common tranſlation better, which is more ſimple; and I apprehend there are good authorities for it.

aſſiſt

assist others on the principles of my religion; expect no return from
36. man; but dedicate your good actions to God; imitating that supreme benefactor, who is kind even to those, who least deserve his favour.

37. 38. In the mean time, beware of spiritual pride. Let not an opinion of yourselves lead you to censure others. An uncharitable heart is among those things, which are the most unacceptable to God. Be as ready therefore to forgive the offences of others, as to impart to them what you possess; being well assured, that God's treatment of you will be in a great measure conformable to your treatment of your neighbour.

39. But, above all, it behoves him, who guides others, to keep his own steps direct. If the blind lead the blind, the consequence must
40. be fatal to both. My disciples will have their difficulties to oppose —but none, which I shall not have opposed before them: and the aim of a disciple should be to conform himself to the example of his master.

41. 42. Try your own hearts. Before you correct your brother, examine yourself. It is the vilest hypocrisy to exclaim against his corruptions, while you allow your own. If true religion lie at the heart, it will
43. as naturally produce a good life, as a tree does it's fruit. The good
44. 45. 46. life is the test. It is this, not an hypocritical pretence to religion, which discovers the man. He therefore, who receives the doctrines
47. of the gospel; and at the same time steadily obeys them; is esta-
48. blished, like a house built on a rock: it stands so firm, that nothing

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38. *Shall men give into your bosom,* says the text. This is an allusion to the long mantles the Jews wore, in which the common people used often to carry corn, and other things. See Ruth iii. 15. Neh. v. 13.

48. The observations made here arise very aptly in such a mountainous and rocky country as Judæa. The hills are slightly covered with earth; and the rains, which are very violent, are apt to overturn such houses, as have not their foundations well laid.

can

can overturn it. While he, who leaves a good life out of his religion; 49.
builds his houſe upon the ſand; which can never furniſh a ſolid foundation.

CHAP. VII.

When Jeſus had finiſhed his diſcourſe to the people, he went to 1.
Capernaum: and as he entered the town, he was met by ſome re- 2. 3. 4.
ſpectable Jews, who told him, they were ſent by a Roman centurion to beg him to heal a favorite ſervant. The centurion, they aſſured him, was a perſon of a very ſerious diſpoſition; and well-affected 5.
to the Jewiſh nation; having at his own expence built a ſynagogue.

Jeſus immediately went with them: but as he approached the 6.
houſe, the centurion ſent his friends to inform him that he thought himſelf unworthy of Jeſus's preſence—that he did not think himſelf 7.
worthy even to approach him—but deſired him only to ſpeak a word; and he had no doubt, but his ſervant ſhould be healed—ad- 8.
ding, that if he himſelf, who was only an inferior officer in an army, could order the motions of others at a diſtance; he was perſuaded, that Jeſus had ſuch power over nature, that he might command what he pleaſed.

This meſſage was delivered to Jeſus before a number of people; 9.
to whom he immediately ſaid, he had not found ſuch an inſtance of faith even in Iſrael.

The meſſengers, on returning home, found the ſervant perfectly 10.
recovered.

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10. The *circumſtances* of St Luke's account of the centurion's ſervant, differ ſo eſſentially from St. Matthew's, that no harmonizer, I think, can bring the two relations together with any conſiſtence. At the ſame time, all that is *really eſſential* in them both, is ſo *exactly the ſame*, that, for myſelf, I feel not the leaſt wiſh to do it. Both the evangeliſts place the faith of the centurion, and the greatneſs of the miracle (which are the points in view) in a light equally ſtrong.

Soon

11. 12. Soon after, as Jesus was entring a city called Nain, with his disciples, and a number of people, he met a poor widow, accompanied
13. by a great multitude, following an only son to his grave. Jesus,
14. touched with her sorrows, spake comfortably to her; and ordered the bearers to stand still. Then looking on the dead person, he bad him
15. arise. On this he was instantly restored, not only to life, but to perfect health.

16. This great miracle drew upon Jesus the respect, and reverence of
17. all, who were present; and spread his fame not only through Judea; but through all the neighbouring countries.

18. In the mean time, the disciples of John, fearing lest the fame of Jesus should rise above that of their master, told him all they had heard.

19. 20. John, who was still in prison, thinking it the best way of instructing them, to make them instruct themselves, sent two of them to Jesus, desiring to know, Whether he were the real Messiah?

21. They accordingly delivered their message. But Jesus taking no immediate notice of them, continued the gracious work of healing
22. the sick, in which he happened to be at that time engaged: and when he had done, he bad them tell their master, what they had
23. seen, and heard—pronouncing a blessing on those, who should get the better of their prejudices; and from what they saw, should acknowledge, and trust in the Messiah.

24. 25. 26. 27. 28. When the two disciples were gone, Jesus spoke highly to the people, of John. Your expectations, said he, were justly raised,

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12. It was a custom among the Jews, that all who met a corpse should join the procession. This made these processions often very large.

19. See the note on the parallel place in Matt. xi.

when

when you attended that holy man in the wilderneſs. You expected to ſee a prophet; and you ſaw one of the greateſt that ever appeared. The prophets of old only predicted the Meſſiah. But the dignity of John's office conſiſted in preparing his way. And yet the office of thoſe, who are directly employed in preaching the goſpel, is ſuperior even to that of John.——But tho ſuch numbers, added Jeſus, 29.
went out to hear John, yet the meek and humble ſinner only liſtened to his inſtruction, and was brought to repentance. The Scribes, 30.
and Phariſees, too proud to learn, rejected God's gracious offers of mercy. To what ſhall I compare this unteachable ſpirit? Like the 31. 32.
frowardneſs of children, which is averſe to every thing, that is propoſed, it will liſten neither to one kind of inſtruction, nor another. John appeared with auſterity. His doctrine therefore could not be 33.
endured. It was the language of a man poſſeſſed. I come with leſs 34.
ſeverity; ſuiting myſelf more to ſocial life. The concluſion is, I am a friend of publicans, and ſinners. But the wiſdom of God will 35.
finally ſhew itſelf in all his diſpenſations.

Some time after Jeſus was invited to the houſe of a Phariſee, whoſe 36.
name was Simon; where a woman, who had been a notorious ſinner, 37. 38.
coming in, as they ſat at table, and ſtanding at the feet of Jeſus, teſtified her ſins; and at the ſame time ſhowed her love and reſpect for him, by very extraordinary acts of humility, and attention.

Simon obſerving her behaviour, ſaid within himſelf, Surely if this 39.
perſon had been a prophet, he might have known, how very notorious a ſinner this woman is; and would have been diſguſted at her familiarity.

Simon, ſaid Jeſus, I have ſomewhat to ſay to you. A certain 40. 41.
creditor had two debtors; one of whom owed him a large ſum; the other a trifling one. But, as neither of them was able to pay, he 42.
forgave them both. Which of them, think you, will ſhew the greateſt regard, and affection to him?

43. I ſuppoſe, anſwered Simon, that he, to whom he forgave moſt.

It is true, ſaid Jeſus; and thus the returning ſinner, like this woman, ſhews more extraordinary inſtances of zeal, and love, than if her ſins had been fewer. For that reaſon therefore ſuch a perſon as this before me, is ſo far from being an object of
44. 45. 46. reproof; that ſhe becomes an object of pity, and pardon. You yourſelf are a witneſs, how much her zeal hath exceeded all common bounds.

47. 48. 49. 50. Then turning to the woman, he bad her go in peace; aſſuring her, that in conſideration of her faith, her penitence, and love; her ſins were forgiven.—This gave new offence to the Phariſee; and thoſe who were with him. However, no farther notice was taken of the matter, at that time†.

CHAP. VIII. 1. 2. 3. From hence Jeſus went among the neighbouring villages, preaching the goſpel, attended by his diſciples; and many others, who waited on him, and adminiſtred to his neceſſities; particularly

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47. See Matt. ix. 2, and Mark ii. 5.

† This account of Simon's ſupper is introduced on ſo different an occaſion; and varies, in ſo many particulars, from the accounts of Matthew (xxvi. 6.) and Mark (xiv. 3.) that many commentators have been led to conſider them as totally different events. At the ſame time, they agree in ſo many circumſtances, that it is not eaſy to come at this concluſion. It appears to me as moſt probable, that all the evangeliſts allude to the ſame fact. St. Luke, it is true, introduces it earlier in the hiſtory. The other evangeliſts place it near the time of our Saviour's death; with which they connect it; and with which indeed it connects with more apparent propriety. But, excepting this circumſtance, we may ſuppoſe, that Matthew and Mark mention what Jeſus ſaid to the woman; and Luke, what he might ſay, at the ſame time, to Simon. Or (if this does not appear probable) how would the truth of ſcripture ſuffer, if we ſhould ſuppoſe, that Luke might relate on *this* occaſion, the parable of the two debtors, tho it was really ſpoken on *ſome ſimilar one?* The doctrines, and truths conveyed, are the great points: and theſe are exactly the ſame, on whatever occaſion they were ſpoken.

2. Mary Magdalen is commonly conceived to have been a very bad woman, before her knowledge of Chriſt: but no ſuch intimation appears from this, or any other paſſage of ſcripture; unleſs we *ſuppoſe* her to be the perſon mentioned by Luke in the laſt chapter.

Mary

Mary of Magdala, whom he had dispossessed of several evil spirits; and Joanna the wife of Herod's steward.

It was about this time, that Jesus delivered the parable of the 4.
sower to a large, and mixed company. Under this similitude he presented a view of the gospel dispensation; and of it's effects on different kinds of men.

As a husbandman, said he, was sowing his seed, some fell on 5.
the beaten road, and were picked up by birds. Others falling 6.
on a rocky soil, sprang up indeed; but soon withered for want of 7.
moisture. Some again fell among thorns, which grew up together
with the seed, and choaked it. But such as fell on good ground, 8.
prepared to receive it, brought forth fruit in great abundance†. This parable Jesus recommended with much earnestness to the attention of his hearers.

When the disciples were alone with him, they asked him pri- 9.
vately the meaning of it.

To you, said Jesus, I can speak without reserve: but to the 10.
people in general I speak in parables. Their prejudices shut their ears against *direct instruction*. They must be drawn, as it were, to *instruct themselves*.

With regard to the parable; the seed is the gospel. The beaten- 11. 12.
path represents those hardened hearts, which never receive it. The 13.
shallow soil, where the seed is scorched, holds out those, who
cannot bear the test of persecution; and the weedy soil, those, 14.

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† This parable, which is indeed a very beautiful one, seems, in a particular manner, to have engaged the attention of the disciples of Jesus. The three evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke, especially the two former, have recorded it in words, so nearly similar, that I think it not improbable, that this, and perhaps some other parts of our Saviour's discourses, might have been preserved in writing, and handed about among his followers, before his whole history was put together.

whoſe religion is choaked by the cares and pleaſures of the world:
15. while the good ground gives us the reſemblance of thoſe, who, in the ſincerity of their pious hearts, hear the goſpel, and obey it.
16. And now, continued Jeſus, it will be expected from you, that you teach the doctrines to others, which you receive from me. No man lights a candle to cover it up; but placeth it, where it may
17. give light to thoſe, who enter the houſe. And be aſſured, that I tell you nothing in private, which is not intended to be publiſhed,
18. and explained to all the world. Be attentive therefore to what you hear. He who improves his talents by inſtructing others, ſhall abound more and more: while he, who miſapplies them; ſhall loſe by degrees, thoſe talents, which he poſſeſſed.

19. 20. About this time, as Jeſus was inſtructing the people, he was told, that his mother, and brethren, who could not get to him through the croud, deſired to ſee him. He took this opportunity, (as he did all others of conveying inſtruction) to ſhew how much he preferred ſuch connections, as were founded in religion, to thoſe, which aroſe only from family, and tribe. Theſe, ſaid he, are
21. indeed my natural relations; but I conſider ſuch chiefly as related to me, who hear the word of God, and obey it.

22. Jeſus being now fatigued with inſtructing the people, ordered
23. his diſciples to procure a boat to paſs over the lake; and as ſoon as they had embarked, he fell aſleep.

In the mean time, a violent ſtorm aroſe, and endangered the
24. veſſel. But Jeſus being awakened by their cries of diſtreſs, thought proper to work a miracle to relieve them; and immediately com-
25. manded a calm. He then rebuked their want of truſt in him, after they had ſeen ſo many inſtances of his power. But they inſtead of giving him any anſwer, were loſt in wonder and amazement, as if this had been the firſt miracle he had ever wrought.

The

The boat ſoon landed them in the country of the Gadarenes, which is oppoſite to the coaſts of Galilee. 26.

Here he was met by a raging demoniac, who had long been the annoyance of the neighbourhood. Often they had attempted to bind, and ſecure him; but ſuch was his ſtrength, that he broke his chains, and fled into theſe ſolitary places, where he dwelt among the tombs. On ſeeing Jeſus, he ran to him; and kneeling down, acknowledged his divine power, and intreated, that he might not be ordered into a place of torment. On Jeſus's queſtioning the man, he ſaid, his name was Legion; intimating, that this poſſeſſion was a combination of evil ſpirits. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31.

It happened, there was a herd of ſwine feeding near the place; into which, on Jeſus's permiſſion, the evil ſpirits entered, after they had left the man; and immediately the whole herd ran violently down a precipice into the lake, and were drowned. 32. 33.

The keepers flying into the city, and relating what had happened, great multitudes came out; and ſeeing the man ſitting, cloathed, and in his perfect ſenſes; and hearing all the particulars on the ſpot, they were greatly terrified; and intreated Jeſus to leave them. Jeſus therefore finding they were not yet in a diſpoſition to receive the goſpel, embarked again, and repaſſed the lake. The man, whom he had healed, would gladly have gone with him; but Jeſus choſe rather to make an impreſſion on the people, in favour of the goſpel, by leaving among them a ſtanding monument of its power, and truth. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39.

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27. The text ſays, *there met him out of the city*. The words of the original, εκ της πολεως, have not that meaning. They ſignify only, *of the city*, or *formerly belonging to the city*.

28. Better; *What haſt thou to do with us?*

33. See the note on this miracle in the viiith of Matthew.

37. See the notes on Matt. ix. 24.

On

40. On his returning to the other ſide of the lake, the croud, which had not yet diſperſed, received him with joy.

41. 42. 43. Among them was the ruler of a ſynagogue, of the name of Jairus, who advancing from the reſt, and falling at the feet of Jeſus, beſought him to go home with him, and heal his daughter, an only child, who lay at the point of death. Jeſus therefore went with him, attended by many people.

It happened, that among them, was a poor woman, who had laboured, many years, under a bloody flux, which had been deemed incurable. This perſon having heard of the fame of Jeſus, and wiſhing to receive a private cure, thought, if ſhe could only touch
44. his garment, it would be ſufficient. Accordingly ſhe made the experiment; and found the deſired effect.

45. Jeſus however unwilling that ſuch an inſtance of faith ſhould paſs unobſerved, turning round, aſked, who touched him?

The diſciples were ſurprized at the queſtion, as the croud was preſſing him in every direction.

46. 47. But Jeſus perſiſting in his enquiry; the woman perceived, that ſhe could not be concealed; and falling down at his feet, in great confuſion confeſſed the truth.

48. Jeſus commending publicly her great faith, which was all he deſigned, bad her go in peace.

49. During this tranſaction a meſſenger came from Jairus's houſe, to prevent giving Jeſus any further trouble, as the young woman was now dead.

50. But Jeſus turning to the afflicted father, bad him only believe; and he ſhould yet receive her again.

51. When they arrived at the houſe, Jeſus ſuffered nobody to enter the chamber with him, but Peter, James, and John, and the father,
52. and mother of the young woman. There finding the mourners making

making great lamentations, he told them, they ſhould ſee, only the common effects of ſleep. But they were ready to deride him, know- 53.
ing certainly that ſhe was dead.

Jeſus however removing them from the chamber, took her by the 54.
hand, and bad her riſe: on which ſhe inſtantly revived. He then 55. 56.
ordered food to be given her; and bad the aſtoniſhed parents keep the matter to themſelves.

CHAP. IX.

About this time Jeſus ſent out his twelve diſciples to preach the 1. 2.
goſpel in Judea; and gave them power to confirm the truth of it by miracles. Make no preparation, ſaid he, for your journey. Take 3.
nothing ſuperfluous. Be eaſily ſatisfied with your accommodations; 4.
and leave thoſe who will not receive you, to the judgment of God. 5.
——With theſe inſtructions the apoſtles went out, and executed 6.
their commiſſion with great ſucceſs.

The fame of Jeſus was now ſo much increaſed, that Herod be- 7. 8.
came greatly perplexed about him. Some ſuppoſed him to be Elias, or one of the old prophets ariſen from the dead. But what chiefly 9.
diſtreſſed Herod, was the fear of his being John the baptiſt; whom he had unjuſtly beheaded. Theſe thoughts wrought much upon him; and he was very deſirous to ſee Jeſus.

In the mean time the apoſtles returned from their miſſion; and 10.
related to their maſter the particulars of it. That they might be the more private, Jeſus retired with them to a ſolitary place, near Bethſaida.

But his retreat was preſently diſcovered; and a great croud coming 11.
together broke in upon his retirement; and engaged him in the offices of preaching, and healing the ſick.

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5. See a note on Matt. x. 14.

Night

12. Night drawing on, his diſciples begged he would diſmiſs the people, as they could neither get lodging, nor victuals, in that ſo-
13. litary place. But Jeſus finding they had five loaves and two fiſhes,
14. 15. 16. ordered them to make the multitude, which confiſted of about five thouſand people, ſit down in companies of fifty together. He then took the loaves, and fiſhes, and giving thanks, he brake them in pieces, and gave them to his diſciples to diſtribute among the people;
17. who were not only ſatisfied; but left behind them fragments, which filled twelve baſkets.

18. From hence Jeſus retired to private prayer: and being afterwards alone with his diſciples, he aſked them, (as they had juſt been preaching in the country) What was the general opinion of men about him?

19. They anſwered, that ſome ſaid he was John the Baptiſt—ſome Elias—and others, one of the old prophets ariſen from the dead.

20. Jeſus then aſked them, Whom they themſelves ſuppoſed him to be?

Peter immediately anſwered, The promiſed Meſſiah.

21. Jeſus however ordered them not to mention him, at preſent,
22. under that name. Before this great truth, ſaid he, ſhall be fully cleared, I muſt ſuffer from the malice of the chief prieſts, and Scribes; and even be put to death. But on the third day, I will
23. riſe again. Whoever therefore means to be my diſciple, muſt
24. follow my painful ſteps. To ſave your lives at the expence of your religion, is the greateſt loſs: and to loſe your lives for its
25. ſake, the greateſt gain. For what is a man profited, if he ſhould gain the whole world, at the expence of his ſoul?

26. Conſider alſo with what confuſion that man ſhall meet my diſpleaſure at the day of judgment, who has ſhewn a diſregard for
27. the goſpel, during his life upon earth But for your comfort be aſſured, that you ſhall ſee manifeſt inſtances of my power, even in

in the courſe of the preſent generation; and ſhall have full conviction of the reality of my kingdom.

A few days after this, with a view to give his diſciples a foretaſte of that glory, which might ſerve to comfort them under the ſufferings, he had been repreſenting; he carried Peter, James, and John to the top of a mountain; where, after prayer, his whole perſon took ſuddenly a reſplendent form: his very garment became luminous. On his right, and left, ſtood the two great prophets of the law, Moſes, and Elijah; arrayed in the ſame glory. They ſeemed in earneſt converſation with Jeſus; and were heard diſtinctly to ſpeak to him of the great event, he was about to accompliſh at Jeruſalem. 28. 29. 30. 31.

The diſciples had been at firſt aſleep, while Jeſus was praying; but immediately awaking, they ſaw the whole; and Peter in an ecſtacy, cried out to Jeſus, Lord, let us fix this glorious ſcene; and build tabernacles for thee, for Moſes, and for Elijah. 32. 33.

As he was ſpeaking, a dark cloud overſpread the whole viſion; and caſt a momentary terror over the minds of the diſciples. As it paſſed by them, a voice broke from it, This is my beloved Son, hear him. When the cloud had paſſed, the viſion was gone; and Jeſus was left ſtanding alone with his diſciples, as before.——By his order this tranſaction was kept private among themſelves, till after his reſurrection. 34. 35. 36.

The next morning, as he deſcended the mountain, he found a great croud aſſembled; from which a man advancing, kneeled 37.

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31. St. Luke, by giving this circumſtance (omitted by the other evangeliſts) adds a wonderful force to the narrative. Theſe two great prophets, by talking of the ſufferings of the Meſſiah at Jeruſalem, ſeem thus in a viſible manner, as it were, to concentrate the whole body of prophecy in Jeſus.

32. See a note on Matt. xvii. 3.

38. down before him, beſeeching him to have mercy on his only ſon;
39. who was poſſeſſed by an evil ſpirit, under which he had ſuffered
40. greatly. I hoped, ſaid he, that your diſciples could have relieved him; but they could not.

41. Jeſus then rebuking his diſciples for their want of faith, ordered the man to bring his ſon to him.

42. This threw the youth into new agonies, and convulſions: but Jeſus immediately relieved him; and delivered him perfectly reſtored to his father.

43. This wonderful cure drawing the admiration of all, who were preſent, on Jeſus, he feared the effect it might have on the minds
44. of his diſciples; and took an opportunity to fix their attention again on the ſufferings, which he had told them he muſt ſoon undergo
45. 46. at Jeruſalem.——But they had little conception of what he meant; and were much more inclined to give way to worldly hopes, and expectations.

47. Jeſus to repreſs theſe undue notions, in his accuſtomed manner, by a ſenſible repreſentation, took a child, and told them, that
48. they who could not lay aſide their worldly prejudices, and imitate ſuch innocence as was then before them, were neither qualified to receive the goſpel, nor to inherit the kingdom of heaven. That perſon, ſaid he, will there be greateſt, who in this world conſiders himſelf as the leaſt.

49. 50. On this occaſion John teſtifying his zeal, told Jeſus, They had ſeen a perſon attempting to caſt out devils in his name: but as he was not a diſciple, they had forbidden him. Jeſus checking this forwardneſs, ſaid, he wiſhed to conſider every one as for him, who did not openly appear againſt him.

51. The paſſover was now approaching, and Jeſus reſolving to go to Jeruſalem, to finiſh his miniſtry there by his death, ſent two of his

his diſciples into a Samaritan city, through which he was to paſs, to make ſome preparation for him, and his company. But the 53.
Samaritans finding he was going to the paſſover at Jeruſalem; refuſed to admit him becauſe of their enmity to the Jews. James, 54.
and John reſenting this indignity, begged their maſter to call fire from heaven to conſume them, as Elijah had done on a like occaſion. But Jeſus rebuked their improper zeal. You underſtand 55. 56.
not, ſaid he, the mild temper of the goſpel. What might become a Jewiſh prophet in the court of an idolatrous prince, would ill ſuit a miniſter of my religion. He took no notice therefore of the ill-treatment he had found among the Samaritans; but went to another village.

About this time he diſcovered the falſe pretences of ſome, who 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62.
attended him on worldly motives. The zeal of one he cooled by trying, whether he had faith ſufficient to give up his temporal expectations for the goſpel. Another, whom he invited to be his diſciple, begged firſt to wait, till his father's death; that he might ſettle his affairs. A third expreſſed his readineſs to preach the goſpel; but he firſt deſired to take leave of his friends. Jeſus looking upon all theſe as worldly excuſes, obſerved, that no man, who was in earneſt a diſciple of the goſpel, would make it the *firſt* employment of his thoughts, to ſeek for a reaſon for not immediately cloſing with it.

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54. See 2 Kings, i. 10.

62. *No man having put his hand to the plough*, &c. St. Luke alone mentions this adage. Heſiod's inſtructions to a plowman, are not a bad illuſtration of it. *The good plowman*, ſays he, *muſt keep his eye intent on his work, and not gaze about; that he may make a ſtraight furrow.* Heſ. Ἔργ. lib. II. v. 61.

CHAP. X.

Jeſus at this time, added ſeventy other diſciples, to his twelve
1. apoſtles; and ſent them, two, and two together, to preach in
different towns, and villages; intending himſelf to follow them.
2. The harveſt, ſaid he, is truly abundant; pray to God for more
3. labourers to reap it. Encounter with meekneſs the violence of
4. the world. Carry nothing ſuperfluous with you. Keep the great
5. errand, you are ſent on, always in view. Bleſs the houſe you
6. enter. Your bleſſing will either reſt upon it, if there are any
diſpoſed to receive it, or it will return in comfort to yourſelves. Be
7. 8. eaſily ſatisfied, and contented, where you are firſt received. Be
labourers worthy of your hire; and ſhew yourſelves not ſolicitous
9. about worldly accommodations. Heal the ſick; and exhort men
10. 11. every where to prepare for the kingdom of heaven by repentance,
and reformation. As to thoſe cities, which will not receive you,
they muſt be left to the judgment of God: but let none go un-
12. warned of the danger of their ſtate. In the offers of the goſpel,
they have had advantages, which Sodom never had; and if they
13. 14. 15. reject them, muſt expect a ſeverer treatment. Such are the cities
of Chorazin, Bethſaida, and Capernaum. They have rejected offers,
which might have converted heathen cities; and ſhall find, that
an impenitent hardneſs of heart, and an obſtinate oppoſition to the
goſpel, are among thoſe ſins, which ſhall ſubject them to a ſevere
16. account. He who rejects you, rejects me; and he who rejects
me, rejects the Father, who ſent me.

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1. St. Luke is the only evangeliſt, who has given us an account of the ſeventy. This makes the ancient tradition more probable, that he himſelf was one of them.

4. *Salute no man*, is only a phraſe equivalent to, *ſuffer nothing to retard you*.

6. *Son of peace*. It is a common Jewiſh phraſe to ſtile a man the ſon of any good, or bad quality he poſſeſſes. The *children of wrath*; the *ſon of perdition*, are ſimilar phraſes.

11. See a note on Matt. x. 14.

With

With this charge the diſciples were diſmiſſed; and executed 17.
their commiſſion with great ſucceſs. On their return to their
maſter, they expreſſed their joy, on having been enabled, through
his name, to caſt out devils. Jeſus aſſured them, that the power 18.
of the devil ſhould more, and more be abridged; and that they 19.
ſhould more and more be ſtrengthened againſt all their enemies.
Be not however, added he, ſo much rejoiced that evil ſpirits are 20.
ſubject unto you—eſpecially let not ideas of this kind lead you to
any thoughts of ſelf-exaltation: but let your great joy, and comfort
ariſe from that holy faith, and obedience to God, which will
ſecure to you the bleſſed hope of everlaſting life.

Then Jeſus breaking out into a pathetic prayer, thanked God 21.
for laying open the great truths of the goſpel, not only to the wiſe,
and learned; but to the very loweſt, and ſimpleſt of mankind.

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17. As our Saviour had ſet out on his journey to Jeruſalem, when he diſmiſſed the ſeventy diſciples, we muſt ſuppoſe, in order to make the evangeliſt conſiſtent, that he went by very eaſy, and perhaps not by direct ſtages; preaching in all the towns, and villages, as he went. But as St. Luke is not very exact in his chronology, theſe circumſtances might perhaps have attended one of thoſe former journeys to Jeruſalem, of which St. John ſpeaks.

18. The expreſſion in the original, *I ſaw Satan as lightning fall from heaven*, is very grand, and beautiful. It is a ſublime idea; and the more ſo becauſe of its obſcurity. I have not retained the original expreſſion; as the uniformity of my work requires theſe noble flights of eaſtern ſublimity to be ſimply explained.

19. This expreſſion *I give you power to tread on ſerpents, and ſcorpions*, does not at all, I think, relate to the power of working miracles; but is a bold, figurative manner of expreſſing, that their ſafety ſhould be God's peculiar care. Thus David ſpeaking of the ſecurity of a good man, ſays (Pſ. xci. 13) *Thou ſhalt go upon the lion and adder: the young lion, and dragon ſhalt thou tread under thy feet.*

20. *Rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven.* This expreſſion is commonly brought in proof of abſolute, unconditional election. But it ſeems abſurd to prove a doctrine by a figurative expreſſion; the *natural meaning* too of which is ſo obvious to common ſenſe.

He

22. He then turned to his diſciples, and told them, that the intire diſpenſation of the goſpel was committed to him—that the great ſcheme of it was inſcrutable to man—that no part of it was of human inſtitution—but the whole was a revelation from God.
23. And be you greatly thankful, ſaid he, to your heavenly Father, for
24. giving you a knowledge of theſe things, which patriarchs, and prophets have wiſhed to know; but could ſee only at a diſtance in ſhadowy repreſentations.

25. About this time a Scribe came to Jeſus, and aſked him, with an inſidious deſign, what he ſhould do to inherit eternal life?
26. Jeſus referred him to the law; aſking him, What he there found on that head?
27. The Scribe anſwered, he was there taught to love God with all his heart; and his neighbour as himſelf.
28. Jeſus told him, if he could do that, he wanted nothing elſe to ſecure his ſalvation.
29. But here a difficulty ocurred to the enquirer. He knew the circumſcribed bounds of neighbourhood, among the Jews eſpecially, who would allow no rites of hoſpitality to their near neighbours,

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22. Such paſſages as theſe, I think, ſhould abate much of that prying curioſity of man, which endeavours to ſcrutinize the depths of divine truth. Whatever may be the preciſe meaning of the words, *No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father*, they muſt, I think, at leaſt be conceived to convey ſome deep myſterious truth. How far they may, or may not relate to the great atonement, and ſacrifice of Chriſt, who dare ſay? Thoſe parts of the great covenant of grace, which relate to *God Almighty* are, no doubt, incomprehenſible to us. Thoſe parts, which relate to *us*—which regulate our faith, and practice, are ſufficiently plain. God has, in ſhort, given us ſufficient evidence to *believe in the goſpel*; and on that evidence we muſt *exerciſe our faith* in believing ſome truths; which we cannot underſtand.

28. The *impoſſibility* of doing this—that is of *keeping the whole law*—was what made a Saviour neceſſary.

the

the Samaritans. Being willing therefore to juſtify his own practice, he aſked Jeſus, whom he ſhould call his neighbour?

Jeſus inſtead of convincing him by argument, that all mankind, 30.
even Samaritans, were to be eſteemed his *neighbours*, obliged him by laying an appoſite caſe before him, to convince himſelf.

A Jew, ſaid he, on a journey from Jeruſalem to Jericho, fell among thieves, who treating him with great cruelty, left him on the road almoſt expiring. It happened, that a prieſt coming that 31.
way, juſt looked on him; but went on without the leaſt endeavour to relieve him. A Levite, ſoon after, acted the ſame unfriendly 32.
part. But a Samaritan paſſing that road, and ſeeing a man in 33.
diſtreſs, immediately gave him the beſt relief he could on the ſpot; 34. 35.
and ſetting him on his own beaſt, carried him to a place of ſecurity, where he took all the care of him in his power. Which now of 36.
theſe three, ſaid Jeſus to the Scribe, was neighbour to him who fell among thieves?

He certainly, replied the Scribe, who relieved him. 37.

Jeſus by thus making him acknowledge the propriety of a Samaritan's acting as a neighbour to a Jew, made him in effect acknowledge alſo the propriety of a Jew's acting as a neighbour to a Samaritan; and diſmiſſed him with an injunction to copy the example.

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30. The ſcene is laid on this road with great propriety; as it ran through a deſert; which from being infeſted by banditti, was called, as Jerom tells us, *the bloody way*. Jeruſalem ſtanding high, and Jericho being ſeated in a valley, it was properly ſaid *going down* to it.

34. Oil and wine are to this day, under the name of the *ſcriptural balſam*, applied to green wounds.

35. *He took out two-pence*; which is about fifteen pence of our money; and would in that country go about as far as three or four ſhillings with us; being equivalent to the price of two days labour.

Jeſus

38. 39. 40. 41. 42. Jesus still continuing his journey towards Jerusalem; called for refreshment at the house of two sisters, Martha, and Mary. Both of them were pious women; and both were desirous to shew their respect to him: but in different ways. Martha was solicitous about providing the best entertainment in her power. Mary sat at his feet, listening to his divine instructions. At this indifference about household matters, Martha taking offence, begged Jesus to order Mary to her assistance.

Jesus replied, Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and perplexed about needless things: one great business only can be called truly necessary; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken from her.

CHAP. XI. 1. On another occasion, as Jesus had been praying, his disciples begged him to instruct them in the duty of prayer, as John had instructed his disciples.

2. Jesus gave them the following prayer as the model of their prayers in general.

Heavenly Father, grant that all mankind may have just notions of thee—that they may receive thy holy religion—and live in obe-
3. dience to thy will, as the blessed angels do in heaven. With regard
4. to temporal things, grant us the necessaries of life. With regard to spiritual things, forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those, who have trespassed against us; assist us with thy grace in getting the better of temptation; and deliver us from evil.

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40. The word in the original περιεσπατο is very expressive; signifying, to be *drawn different ways at the same time:* as if she wished to attend to Jesus; but thought the business of the house more necessary

40. The word συναντιλαβηται signifies literally *to help together with*; and is the very word chosen by St. Paul, to express the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Rom. viii. 26.

41. It is astonishing, that Theophylact, and other interpreters after him, (Bp. Pearce in particular) should explain this noble passage, as if alluding to *one dish of meat*.

Jesus

Jeſus having thus taught them how to pray; taught them next 5.
the duty of perſeverance in prayer. If any of you, ſaid he, ſhould
go at midnight to a friend, and deſire him to riſe, and ſupply you
with proviſion for a gueſt, who had unexpectedly arrived; tho 6. 7.
your friend might heſitate at firſt from the unſeaſonableneſs of the
hour; yet, on perſiſting in your requeſt, he might at length, 8.
through your importunity, be induced to ariſe, and give you what 9. 10.
you wanted. Be you then ardent, and ſincere in your petitions to
your heavenly Father, and you ſhall find, in the end, they ſhall
aſſuredly be granted. Would any of you, if his ſon ſhould aſk 11. 12.
him a reaſonable requeſt, give him ſomething detrimental? If 13.
weak men therefore attend to the petitions of their children; can
you ſuppoſe, that your heavenly Father will do leſs?

About this time, Jeſus having caſt out a devil from a dumb man, 14.
immediately healed him, and reſtored him to the uſe of his ſpeech.

On this great miracle the people ſhewed him every mark of
reſpect. But the Scribes and Phariſees became the more violent 15.
againſt him; informing the people, that he caſt out devils merely
through a *confederacy with them.*

Others again pretending to be diſſatisfied with the miracles he had 16.
wrought *on earth,* which appeared to be no evidence of his divine
commiſſion; demanded a ſign *from heaven.*

To all this malice Jeſus replied, that, in every government, an 17.
oppoſition among the members, is fatal. If my doctrines, ſaid he, 18.

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6. The idea of *a gueſt in the night,* was more common in thoſe countries, (where people often travelled at that ſeaſon to avoid the heat) than it is with us.

7. The words, in the original, are capable of being tranſlated, *My ſervants,* (or family) *together with myſelf, are all in bed.*

12. *If he aſk an egg, will he give him a ſcorpion?* The body of a ſcorpion is not unlike an egg; ſo that the ſame *ſimilitude* is carried on between the *thing aſked,* and the *thing given.*

lead one way, and the temptations of the devil another; how is it poſſible, there can be any confederacy between us?

19. Beſides, ſaid Jeſus, if I caſt out devils through a confederacy with evil ſpirits, by what means do your diſciples caſt them out? You will not ſuppoſe them to league with devils. Allow me therefore only the ſame credit, you allow them.

20. If then you allow that I caſt out devils by the power of God; you muſt allow alſo, that every thing I ſay, and preach, is of
21. 22. divine authority. When one man overcometh another, and taketh from him his ſtrong holds; you know aſſuredly, which of the
23. two is ſuperior. So that, in fact, this argument is ſo very plain, that I may well conſider him, who is not with me, to be moſt *maliciouſly bent* againſt me: and he muſt take that conſequence, which he draws upon himſelf.

24. 25. 26. Let not your wicked hearts therefore harden you beyond repentance. When an evil ſpirit has left a man, and finding no reſting place, returns to him again with new force; the laſt ſtate of ſuch a perſon, is worſe than the firſt. Take care therefore leſt you Jews, who have been delivered from *heathen ignorance* by the law of Moſes, may not place yourſelves in a ſtill *worſe ſtate*, by rejecting the goſpel.

27. As Jeſus was thus ſpeaking, a woman from the croud, ſtruck with admiration at the wiſdom, and authority of his diſcourſe, cried out, Bleſſed is the mother that bare you: and all things connected
28. with you. Jeſus, who took every occcaſion of giving inſtruction, ſaid, Bleſſed rather are they, who hear the word of God, and keep it.

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19. See a note on Matt. xii. 26.

26. See a note on Matt. xii. 45.

27. Such expreſſions as *the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou haſt ſucked*, were often referred by the Jews to the Meſſiah. They are frequently mentioned in the Talmudic writings.

Jeſus

Jeſus having anſwered the malice of thoſe, *who aſcribed his miracles* 29.
to a confederacy with devils, anſwered thoſe next, *who demanded a ſign from heaven.*

This obſtinate generation, ſaid he, ſeeketh a ſign; but no ſign
ſhall be given them, except the ſign of the prophet Jonas. As his 30.
lying three days in the whale's belly, and afterwards preſenting
himſelf alive, was a proof to the Ninevites of his divine authority;
ſuch proof hereafter ſhall the ſon of man give to this generation:
and they, who reject this laſt ſign, ſhall be among the moſt inex- 31.
cuſeable of all ſinners. The queen of Shebah ſhall riſe in judgment
againſt them. She came from a diſtant country to hear the wiſdom
of Solomon; while they neglect a greater than Solomon, at their 32.
very doors. The Ninevites ſhall riſe in judgment againſt them:
for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; tho Jonas was only
the type of him, whom they reject. They pretend indeed to great 33.
holineſs; but if their hearts were really impreſſed with it, they
would ſhew it in it's effects. As the eye guides the body; ſo does 34.
a ſincere heart, the affections. If ſincerity be wanting, the whole
is darkneſs. Take care therefore, leſt the light of your minds 35.
become darkneſs. If the mind be religious, a devout practice will 36.
follow.

After Jeſus had done teaching the people, one of the Phariſees 37.
invited him to dine: but was much ſurprized at ſeeing him ſit down, 38.
before he had waſhed his hands.

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29. See verſe 16.

33. There is ſome difficulty in the connection of this verſe. The ſame words are applied by St. Matthew to the diſciples, which are here applied to the Phariſees. But the expreſſion is without doubt proverbial; and therefore may admit of different applications. I have followed the interpretation of Dr. Clarke.

39. With vain ſcruples, ſaid Jeſus, do you Phariſees cleanſe your
40. hands; while you leave your hearts impure. Whereas it is the heart
41. chiefly, which God regards. On it lay the ſtreſs; and fear not the
42. wrath of God for eating with unwaſhed hands. The outward obſervances of religion are greatly inferior to it's moral precepts. Slight
43. not therefore the ceremony; but revere the duty. Theſe hypocritical pretences of the Scribes, and Phariſees to more than uſual
44. holineſs ſpring from pride. Like graves, which appear not, ſuch pretenders are full of hidden corruption.

45. In the latter part of this diſcourſe, Jeſus having mentioned the Scribes alſo with the Phariſees; a Scribe in the company obſerved, that his cenſures had involved them alſo.

46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. Jeſus anſwered, He meant it ſhould. How ſevere, ſaid he, are you alſo in your impoſitions on others! How reluctant to bear the leaſt burthen yourſelves! You take away the key of knowledge from them; without applying it to any uſe of your own. You build ſepulchres indeed to the memory of the prophets, whom your fathers put to death: but in doing this, you only ſhew yourſelves their children; and that you mean to imitate their example. Holy prophets, and apoſtles ſhall be ſent among *you*, as were among *your fathers*; and you will treat them with the cruelty of your fathers: that the blood of all the holy prophets, that hath been ſhed from the beginning of time, may juſtify that ſignal vengeance, which ſhall ſhortly come upon this wicked generation.

As Jeſus continued to ſpeak, the Scribes, and Phariſees began to urge him with queſtions; and endeavour, if poſſible, to provoke him to ſay ſome thing, from which they might form an accuſation.

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49. *Therefore alſo ſaid the wiſdom of God.* Many interpreters are of opinion, that our Saviour quotes this account of the cruelty of the Jews to the prophets from ſome book intitled the *Wiſdom of God.*

Some-

Sometime after, a great number of people, collecting about Jesus, he took the opportunity of instructing both his disciples; and his hearers in general. 1.

Above all things, said he, avoid hypocritical pretences in religion. I have always set the truth before you: be you as sincere in communicating it to others. And those doctrines, which you have heard from me in private, preach you to all the world. And be under no apprehensions from the malice and prejudices of men. These injuries reach only the body. But live under a constant sense of that great Being, whose power reaches the soul. That gracious Providence which sustains even the smallest part of his vast creation, will not certainly neglect you. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

But even, if God should suffer you to fall under the malice of your enemies (as in the cause of religion, may be the case) yet still persevere. Consider the reward of suffering for the truth; and the danger of denying it. The highest crime of this kind, into which the wickedness of man's heart can lead him, is that, (into which the Pharisees have fallen,) of ascribing my miracles to the devil. It is a wickedness of the most dangerous kind; as, in a manner, it prevents repentance, by hardening the heart against 8. 9. 10. 11. 12.

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2. 3. These two verses in the original, carry the air of a prudential reason against hypocrisy: as if our Saviour had said, *It is certainly wiser in you, on worldly motives, not to be hypocritical; because sooner, or later, you shall be discovered.* But I cannot conceive this to be the real sense of the passage: both because urging worldly principles against such a vice, is a degrading argument; and also because the parallel place in St. Matthew (x. 26) gives a different sense; which sense I have adopted. — Instead of ελαλησατε *ye have spoken*, it is probable St. Luke wrote ελαλησα *I have spoken*.

7. *But even.* It is probable, that ΑΛΛΑ, which is written in capitals commonly in MSS, was inserted for ΑΜΑ, which it so nearly resembles; and then we should have the better sense of *Yea even*.

the

the laſt great means of conviction.——I conclude my inſtruction on this head, by warning you, when you are brought before your enemies, not to be ſolicitous, what you ſhall ſay: but to reſt aſſured; that God, in thoſe times of neceſſity, will communicate to you a proper defence, through the influence of his Holy Spirit.

13. While Jeſus was thus ſpeaking, a perſon from the croud deſired him to ſettle a difference between him, and his brother.

14. Jeſus telling him, that an affair of that kind did not at all be-
15. long to him; took an occaſion, from this circumſtance, to caution his hearers againſt covetouſneſs.

16. A certain man, ſaid he, found the increaſe of his goods beyond
17. his hopes; and not knowing where to beſtow his abundance; he
18. at length determined to inlarge his ſtore-houſes. After he ſhould
19. thus have compleated all his ſchemes; he reſolved to give a looſe to the pleaſures of life; and fully enjoy the poſſeſſions he had gained.
20. But now obſerve the event. That very night, as he was laying theſe plans of happineſs, his ſoul was required. Whoſe were then
21. the goods, which he thought he had ſecured?——Such is the folly of that man, who is rich in worldly poſſeſſions; but has made no proviſion for everlaſting happineſs.

22. 23. Be not therefore ſolicitous about theſe worldly matters. *Your life* is a pledge from God, that he will provide for the *neceſſities of it*.
24. 25. 26. 27. 28. That gracious power, which feeds the ravens without their care; and cloaths the lilies without their toil; will aſſuredly reach out the ſame protection to you.

Beſides, what folly does ſuch ſolicitude diſcover? with all your anxiety you cannot add one moment to your lives. Why ſhould you therefore be diſtreſſed about other things ſtill as little in your
29. 30. 31. power? Leave then theſe intruding cares to worldly men; and ſeek you the kingdom of God. Your heavenly Father knoweth you

you have need of theſe temporal things, and in his own manner will beſtow them.

And be not ſhaken with the terrors of this life; but oppoſe them 32.
by reflecting on the glories of the next. It is your heavenly
Father's pleaſure to beſtow everlaſting happineſs on you. Sit looſe 33.
then to all the things of this world. Communicate its bleſſings,
if you have them, to thoſe, who want them. Provide yourſelves
bags, which never decay; and lay up treaſures in heaven, which
nothing can injure. Of one thing be well aſſured, that wherever 34.
your treaſure is, there will your hearts be alſo.

Thus laying aſide anxiety for the things of this world, be always 35. 36. 37.
prepared for the next; that, at whatever hour your Lord may 38.
call, he may find you ready; and reward your vigilance. The
uncertainty of your maſter's coming, is ſufficient ground for con-
ſtant preparation. If the hour, in which the thief ſhould come, 39.
were known; the houſe might eaſily be guarded: but *conſtant* vi-
gilance is required.——Be you likewiſe always ready; for the
hour of your death is equally uncertain. 40.

Peter, on his maſter's making a pauſe, deſirous of knowing,
whether theſe precepts were of *general uſe*; or to be applied chiefly 41.
to the diſciples; put the queſtion to him.

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32. *It is your father's good pleaſure.* The word ευδοκησεν ſignifies a *pleaſureable acquieſcence.* The idea of *God's enjoying*; or *reſting*, as it were, *in the enjoyment* of the happineſs he produces, is often touched in ſcripture: and many paſſages, which are made to furniſh only matter of controverſy about election and predeſtination, might furniſh the pious heart with tender, and amiable ideas of the Deity.

35. *Let your loins be girt.* The inhabitants of eaſtern countries wore long garments, and uſed to tuck them up, when they prepared for action: to this the text alludes. Horace gives us the ſame idea,

——veluti ſuccinctus curſitat hoſpes.

Certainly,

42. Certainly, ſaid Jeſus, they are meant as inſtruction for all. Every man ſhould be that faithful ſteward, whom his Lord appoints to
43. 44. manage his affairs. Happy, and eminently rewarded, ſhall that ſervant be, who ſhall be found attentive to the diſcharge of his duty.
45. But if he ſhall build upon his Lord's delay, and behave with info-
46. lence, and oppreſſion; his Lord may come ſuddenly upon him; cut him off in the midſt of his wickedneſs; and give him up to that
47. 48. puniſhment, which he ſo well deſerves. The offence however will always be in proportion to the knowledge. The more informed the ſervant is of his maſter's will, the greater ſhall be his puniſhment, if he neglect it.

49. But ſtill of this be aſſured, that you ſhall find the diſcharge of your duty accompanied with difficulties, and trials. Peaceful, and gentle, as the goſpel is, it will excite great perſecutions againſt it; which
50. are indeed already begun. I myſelf muſt be the firſt ſacrifice. The
51. circumſtances of this great event are now approaching. After that,
52. 53. you muſt expect to ſee many ſcenes of cruelty and diſtreſs: inſomuch that men will break through, not only all the duties of humanity; but all the ties of natural affection.

54. 55. 66. Then turning to the people, If you would attend, ſaid he, you may as eaſily ſee the prophetic ſigns of theſe approaching events, as
57. you can judge of the weather from the appearance of the ſky.—And when you do ſee them, your intereſt ſurely makes it highly neceſſary

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46. See a note on *cutting aſunder*, Matt. xxiv. 51.

49. *What will I, if it be already kindled?*—Some put an interrogation after θελω, and read it thus. *What will I? O that it were already kindled!* conſidering it as a neceſſary part of the goſpel inſtitution. See Bowyer's conject.

55. The heat here mentioned is probably in alluſion to the hot winds, which often blow in thoſe countries from the ſouth.

56. Theſe ſigns are not called *prophetic* in the original; but *prophetic ſigns* are the only ſigns, which our Saviour, I think, could mean.

to

to take warning from them. What perſon at enmity with a powerful neighbour, would not wiſh, before things are carried to extremity, to avert thoſe conſequences, which he cannot but know are coming upon him? 58. 59.

CHAP. XIII.

It happened, about this time, that ſome Galileans having given great offence to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor; he had taken a ſevere revenge; and had fallen on them with a body of troops, in the midſt of a ſolemn ſacrifice. The affair made much noiſe; and ſome people mentioned it to Jeſus, as the effects of a divine judgment. 1.

But Jeſus rebuked their forwardneſs; and bad them not be ſo ready to point out the judgments of heaven from ſuch events, as this they had mentioned; nor from any accidental miſchief, ſuch as the fall of the tower of Siloam, which had killed eighteen people. The light, ſaid he, in which you ſhould conſider theſe things, is that of being warnings to yourſelves. Unleſs you repent, be aſſured, that a greater deſtruction than either of theſe, ſhall fall upon you. 2. 3. 4. 5.

To impreſs this idea the more ſtrongly, he ſpake the following parable. 6.

A perſon, who had a barren fig-tree in his vineyard, bad his gardener cut it down, as he had been long diſappointed in his 7.

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1. The offence, which theſe people gave to Pilate is ſuppoſed to have been their ſpreading among the people, that they were free, and ought not to pay tribute to any foreign power.

5. Many writers have remarked, that on looking into the events of the Jewiſh wars, ſome remarkable calamities befel the Jews, very ſimilar to theſe. A great body of them were ſlain, as they were aſſembled at a ſacrifice. See Bell. Jud. VI. c. 9. and VII. c. 17. and many of them alſo periſhed under the ruins of the temple. VI. c. 4. VII. c. 10. &c.

7. Some interpreters, who ſeek a hidden meaning in *every word* of ſcripture, ſuppoſe the *three years* here mentioned refer to the three years of our Saviour's preaching. I rather ſuppoſe them an indefinite number: as when we ſay, *two or three*; we mean not to confine ourſelves exactly to theſe numbers, but only to a ſmall one.

8. expectation of it's bearing fruit. But the gardener with great importunity, begged him to defer his resolution one year more. I
9. will dig about it, said he, and dung it; and if that produces no effect, there can be no farther hope of it's improvement; and I will then cut it down.

10. It happened, sometime after, that as Jesus was teaching in a
11. synagogue on the sabbath, a woman was there, who through a violent contraction of her limbs, was bowed, as it were, together.
12. 13. Jesus calling her to him, immediately healed her; insomuch that instantly raising herself up, she praised God for his mercy before all the assembly.

14. The ruler of the synagogue, who was a strict Pharisee, observing this, turned to the people; and in a tone of indignation told them, There were six days, in which men might work; on them therefore they ought to come, and be healed; and not on the sabbath-day.

15. Jesus not chusing that such hypocrisy should pass uncensured; asked the ruler of the synagogue; Whether he would scruple to loose his ox, or his ass from a stall on the sabbath, and lead him
16. to water?—And would you be more scrupulous, said he, in loosing a fellow-creature from the bond of an infirmity, which had so long oppressed her?

17. The case, put in so strong a manner, confounded the ruler of the synagogue; while the common people, who considered Jesus's

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8. God is the owner of the garden: his prophets and apostles are represented by the gardener; and the Jewish nation, by the fig-tree. According to the tenor of the parable, God, and his prophets are introduced as holding different sentiments. But in our Saviour's parables only the grand scope is to be attended to; which in this parable is, that the fig-tree should certainly be cut down, if it continued unfruitful.

16. *Whom Satan hath bound, &c.* From this, and some other passages, as 1 Cor. v. 5. and in the case of Job, it appears, as if the devil had at that time the power of inflicting diseases, as well as of possessions.

actions

actions with unprejudiced minds, liſtened to his doctrine with attention; and praiſed God for the wonderful works which he performed.

Jeſus foreſeeing that the goſpel ſhould finally prevail over all 18. 19.
the oppoſition and prejudices of men, compared it, in the ſpirit of prophecy, to a grain of muſtard-ſeed; which, ſaid he, is the leaſt of all ſeeds; but when it has taken root, it becomes the greateſt of plants. In this light, continued he, it is like leaven alſo, which 20. 21.
being hid in a quantity of meal, makes no appearance at firſt; but will ſoon begin to ferment, and ſpread over the whole.

Jeſus was ſtill proceeding towards Jeruſalem, by ſlow ſtages; 22.
and preaching in the towns, and villages, through which he paſſed.

It happened, during his journey, that a perſon, with an indiſ- 23.
crete curioſity, inquired of him, whether the number of thoſe who ſhould be ſaved, was not proportionally very ſmall?

Such queſtions never met with a direct anſwer. However few 24.
they may be, ſaid Jeſus, do you ſtrive to be among them. And of one thing be aſſured, that it is not an inactive wiſh, but a ſerious endeavour, that will gain that end. A time of 25.
mercy is now offered: but if you obſtinately reject it, the door may be ſhut againſt you. Many may be the excuſes, and pretences, 26.
at that awful time: but nothing will abide the teſt, but a holy, 27.
and religious life. As for your claims from Abraham, they will 28.
be of no avail. You ſhall ſee that patriarch, and his pious deſcendants, admitted to God's favour; and yourſelves, if you continue impenitent, thruſt out. Nay you ſhall ſee God's favour 29.
transferred from you to the Gentiles; and while you are rejected, 30.
you ſhall ſee them received, whoſe pretenſions you have always treated with contempt.

31. About this time, ſome of the Phariſees, envying the credit of Jeſus; and deſirous of removing him from the neighbourhood of Jeruſalem, told him, that Herod had formed a deſign to put him to death.

32. Tell that crafty prince, ſaid Jeſus, that he can neither haſten,
33. nor delay, the great work, in which I am engaged. I purſue my journey to Jeruſalem. It is impoſſible, that a prophet ſhould periſh in any other place.

34. Then breaking out into a tender exclamation, he lamented the fate of that unhappy city, ſtained with the blood of ſo many prophets. In vain, ſaid he, hath God extended his mercy to it——
35. that mercy hath been rejected. The period is approaching, when a wonderful deſolation ſhall come upon it; which will at the ſame time be a full evidence of the truth of the Meſſiah's kingdom.

CHAP. XIV.

1. The offence, which Jeſus had lately given by healing a woman on the ſabbath, he gave again on the following occaſion.

He had been invited on that day, to dine with a Phariſee, who, with others at table, had their eyes upon him; as Jeſus knew.
2. It happened (as wherever he went, he was ſure to be attended by ſome in diſtreſs) that a man in a dropſy, preſented himſelf. On
3. ſeeing him, Jeſus turned to the Phariſees, and aſked them, Whether they thought it lawful to heal him on the ſabbath-day?

4. To this queſtion no anſwer was given; and Jeſus healed the
5. man. Then turning again to the Phariſees, he aſked, as he had done before, Whether if any of them ſhould hear, that his beaſt had fallen into a pit, he would not immediately relieve him, tho it ſhould happen to be on the ſabbath?

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5. An aſs, and an ox are often put in ſcripture for every kind of animal. As in the tenth commandment; and in Iſ. i. 3.

This

This queſtion, like the other, was not anſwered. 6.

At the ſame time Jeſus obſerving, with what zeal, and eager- 7.
neſs the ſeveral gueſts endeavoured to get the beſt ſeats, took this opportunity to inculcate humility.

When a man is invited, ſaid he, to an entertainment, it is 8.
highly improper to place himſelf in the beſt ſeat: for if a perſon 9.
of more dignity ſhould arrive; he muſt then, with diſgrace give way. On the other hand, if at firſt he had taken a lower place; 10.
the maſter of the entertainment coming in, and leading him up higher, would do him credit before the company.——Prudence, 11.
ſaid Jeſus, will dictate ſentiments of this kind to you in *worldly matters*: let it be your part to change them into *religious principles*: for God will always reward humility with exaltation.

Jeſus then taking occaſion from the entertainment he had juſt 12. 13. 14.
received; gave his hearers a leſſon on charity alſo, as well as humility. The common mode, ſaid he, of making entertainments in this world, where you invite each other, that you may be invited again, differs greatly from goſpel-charity. The truly charitable man lays aſide all thoughts of worldly recompence; and aſſiſts his neceſſitous neighbours merely for the love of God, and his gracious promiſes.

A perſon in the company, pleaſed with theſe inſtructions, ex- 15.
preſſed aloud his ſenſe of the happineſs of thoſe, who lived under the influence of the goſpel.

Jeſus cloſing with the ſentiment, ſhewed, under the following 16.
parable, how very undeſerving the Jews therefore were, in refuſing it's gracious offers; and how juſtly they ſhould be rejected in favour of the Gentiles.

A rich man, ſaid he, made a great feaſt, to which he invited his particular friends. But they, inſtead of attending, when

called

17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. called, abſented themſelves on trifling excuſes. The maſter of the feaſt diſpleaſed at this neglect, ſent out his ſervants, and in the room of thoſe unworthy gueſts, whom he had firſt invited, filled his table with thoſe, whom they accidently met in the high-roads, and places of public reſort.

25. As Jeſus left the Phariſee's houſe, he was met by a great croud of people; whom he inſtructed in the nature of the goſpel diſpenſation.
26. He, who wiſhes to be my diſciple, ſaid he, muſt not expect a life of eaſe, and luxury. If the advantages of the world, or if his natural affections, ſhould interfere with his religion, he muſt give them up;
27. and be prepared to ſuffer every thing, which a conſcientious diſcharge
28. 29. 30. of his duty may bring upon him. And let theſe great points be well-weighed, and conſidered. In worldly matters, you are all ready enough, eſpecially if it be an affair of conſequence, to weigh well the expence, and trouble, as well as your own abilities, before you engage in it. No man would build a houſe, without conſidering
31. 32. whether he were able to finiſh it. No king would go to war, till
33. he had weighed his own ſtrength, and that of the enemy. Let it be your buſineſs therefore to weigh well what you engage in, before
34. 35. you profeſs yourſelves my diſciples.——Salt is good, but if what

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20. It may be obſerved, that all theſe excuſes are on *lawful occaſions*; which ſhews the irreligion of attending too much *even to neceſſary things*.

23. The papiſts, and others of a perſecuting diſpoſition, are hard put to it, for arguments to defend their cauſe, when they uſe the words of this text, *compel them to come in*, as a principal one. The word in the original, is αναγκαζειν; but the context ſeems to conſtrue it into no idea, but that of *perſuading* them to come in: and, except Acts xxvi. 11, I believe no paſſage in the new teſtament can be produced, in which it has a compulſory meaning. The word bears the ſenſe alſo of *perſuaſive compulſion*, in the beſt attic writers.

26. The expreſſion in the original, *if a man hate not his father, and mother*, tho it ſound harſhly in our ears, was well underſtood by thoſe, who were uſed to ſuch figurative diction.——It is ſuppoſed our Saviour alludes here to that public renunciation, which the Jewiſh proſelyte was obliged to make of all his Gentile relations.

ought

ought to be preſerved by it, is indiſpoſed to receive it's ſeaſoning, no effect can be produced.——Attend carefully to what I ſay; and let it have it's due influence on your minds.

CHAP. XV.

Theſe divine diſcourſes were heard by the common people with great attention; and many perſons, even of wicked lives, were wrought on, to follow Jeſus, and become his hearers. 1.

This again gave great offence to the Scribes, and Phariſees. What holineſs, they would ſay, can there be in a perſon, who keeps company with men of ſuch ſcandalous characters? 2.

Is there one among you, ſaid Jeſus, who having loſt a ſingle ſheep out of a hundred, would not leave the ninety and nine; and go in queſt of that which had ſtrayed? And if he ſhould find it, would he not receive a more ſenſible pleaſure at the recovery of that which had been loſt, than at the ſafety of all the reſt? 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

Or ſuppoſe a perſon, poſſeſſed of ten pieces of money, ſhould loſe one piece; with what anxiety would he ſeek that one piece; and what pleaſure would he feel from the recovery of it?

If then, ſaid Jeſus, we are ſo affected by the trifling things of this world, how ought we to be affected by the recovery of a ſinner to happineſs? This is a ſight, which even your heavenly Father looks on with pleaſure.

From the recovery of particular ſinners, Jeſus enlarging the idea, conſidered the recovery of whole nations; and repreſented, in the following parable, the different circumſtances of Jews, and Gentiles——the acceptance of the latter; and the unreaſonableneſs of the former, in expecting that their privileges ſhould not be communicated to others. 11.

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4. It ſhould be tranſlated, *Doth not leave the ninety, and nine, and goeth into the wilderneſs, &c.*

A certain

12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32.

A certain man, ſaid he, had two ſons; the younger of whom, tired of the reſtraint of a well-ordered family, begged his father to give him at once, his inheritance, and leave him to himſelf. Having obtained his requeſt, he ſet out directly, in ſearch of happineſs, on a long journey. Riot, and prodigality attended all his ſteps; and beggary, and diſtreſs ſoon followed. To ſupply the neceſſities of nature, he was at length obliged to ſubmit to the moſt ſervile employments. But his miſery ſtill increaſing, he came at length to a reſolution to return to his father; and try, if poſſible, to regain his affections. With the deepeſt humility therefore and contrition, he returned, almoſt in the agony of deſpair. But his father, ſeeing him at a diſtance, ran to meet him; and throwing his arms around his neck, received him with unbounded tenderneſs; and carrying him home, ſpent the remainder of the day in rejoicing.

The elder brother, in the mean time, was in the fields: but returning in the evening, was ſurprized, as he approached the houſe, to hear the ſound of muſic, and feſtivity. Calling therefore one of the ſervants to him, he enquired the cauſe; and being informed, that his brother had returned ſafe; and that his father had on that account, made a day of rejoicing; he was highly diſpleaſed, and refuſed to go in. His father condeſcended even to intreat him: but he was received with reproaches. I, who have ſerved you, ſaid the haughty youth, all my life with fidelity, never received the leaſt token of any particular attention. But when your prodigal ſon returns, after conſuming all that he had in riot, nothing is thought too good for him.

To all this impropriety of language the father tenderly replied; Son, you are ever with me, and have partaken always of my kindneſs. Be ſatisfied therefore; and be not offended at my receiving

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15. As the Jews held ſwine to be unclean animals, our Saviour's ſending the prodigal to feed them, ſhews in a ſtrong light his abject condition.

with

with affection your loſt brother, who is reſtored to me by contrition, penitence, and reſolutions of obedience†.

CHAP. XVI.

On another occaſion Jeſus ſhewed his hearers by the following parable, that the things of this world have no uſe, but that of being ſubſervient to a better. 1. 2.

A rich man, ſaid he, had a ſteward, who being accuſed of diſhoneſty, was on the point of being diſmiſſed. Under this diſagreeable circumſtance he began to conſider what he ſhould do. 3.
He could not bear a life of labour; and could not ſubmit to live on alms. After ſome heſitation, he reſolved, at laſt to make an advantage of his ſtewardſhip, before he left it; and to provide for an evil day by making friends of his Lord's debters. 4. 5. 6. 7.
Collecting them together therefore, he examined their ſeveral accounts, and deducted a part from each. 8.
Jeſus then pointed out the management of worldly men, as an example of attention to his followers in their ſpiritual affairs: adding, at the ſame time, an exhortation to make the things of this world ſubſervient to their everlaſting happineſs; 9. 10.
aſſuring them, that if they did not uſe temporal bleſſings, as they ought, they could never be qualified to receive ſpiritual bleſſings. If therefore, added Jeſus, you do not 11.

 firſt

† I have given the *ſubſtance* of the parable: but the *beautiful ſimplicity* of the original can be given in no words but its own. The change of perſon in the thirtieth verſe, *this thy ſon*, into *this thy brother* in the thirty-ſecond, is particularly tender.

1. It is evident from v. 14, that the Phariſees were ſtill among his hearers; and indeed ſuch a diſcourſe as this, ſeemed more adapted to them, than to his immediate diſciples, who had not much of this world's goods to diſpoſe of; tho, in fact, we are ſtewards, not only of riches, but of time, health, ſtrength, leiſure, opportunities, parts, knowledge, in ſhort, of every thing we enjoy.

11. The idea, in a *mortal ſtate*, of calling nothing *our own*, is often illuſtrated by heathen writers.

Nimium.

firſt wean your affections from the love of worldly things, you can
12. never be prepared for heavenly: and if in the uſe of theſe tranſitory
poſſeſſions, you have been found deficient; you ſhall never receive
thoſe everlaſting rewards, which ſhould otherwiſe have been your
13. inheritance. For it is as impoſſible to be given up to this world,
and the next, at the ſame time; as it is to ſerve two maſters of
oppoſite diſpoſitions.

14. Theſe things were ſaid in the hearing of the Phariſees, who
being covetous, and wholly indiſpoſed to ſuch doctrines, endeavoured
to turn them into ridicule.

15. But Jeſus thus rebuked them: That ſtrict obſervance, ſaid he, of
the ceremonies of the law, of which you boaſt, may give you
credit among men; but God knoweth your hearts. Wickedneſs,
16. under whatever ſanctified appearance, is his abhorrence. From
the time of John's preaching, the goſpel is offered univerſally to
17. all mankind; and the types and ceremonies of the law, are, at the
18. ſame time, aboliſhed, and fulfilled. The morality alſo of the law
is heightened, and improved; and what Moſes allowed, as in the
caſe of divorce, for inſtance, for the hardneſs of your hearts, is
now brought within a much ſtricter, and more refined law.

———Nimium vobis Romana propago
Viſa potens, ſuperi, propria hæc ſi dona fuiſſent.
Æn. VI. ver. 870.

Nihil eſſe proprium cuiquam.
Ter. And. Ac. IV.

——Propriæ telluris herum natura, neque illum
Nec me, nec quenquam ſtatuit———
Hor. Sat. Lib. II.

12. *In that, which is another man's*—namely, in that, which is of uncertain poſſeſſion; and may be taken from you.

Jeſus

Jeſus having thus rebuked the hypocriſy of the Phariſees, returned 19.
to the ſubject, which they had interrupted; and, in the following parable, ſhewed them the dreadful conſequences of a voluptuous life, given up wholly to the pleaſures of this world. The parable alſo tended to ſhew the comparative happineſs of good men, tho in the midſt of worldly diſtreſs.

A certain rich man, ſaid he, enjoyed all the happineſs, and pleaſures of this life. His dreſs was the moſt coſtly; and his table
the moſt ſumptuous. In the mean time, a beggar, whoſe name was 20.
Lazarus, lay at his gate, ſtruggling with all the neceſſities of nature;
and wiſhing in vain to ſupply his hunger from the offals of the plen- 21.
tiful table within. To hunger was added the calamity of diſeaſe.
——In proceſs of time the beggar died; and was carried by angels 22.
into a ſtate of happineſs. Soon after, the rich man alſo died: but while his body was depoſited in the grave in all the ſplendor of funeral pomp; his ſoul was conveyed into a place of torment. From 23.
hence caſting up his eyes, he ſaw Abraham afar off in the regions of
happineſs; and Lazarus by his ſide. With a lamentable cry he 24.
begged for mercy; requeſting, that Lazarus might be ſent to dip the tip of his finger only in water, and cool his tongue; for he was tormented in the midſt of flames. But Abraham put him in mind of 25.
the voluptuous life he had led upon earth; and of the little uſe he had made of the bleſſings, with which Providence had intruſted him.——He put him in mind alſo of the reſignation, with which Lazarus had born his diſtreſſed circumſtances; and ſhewed him, that their different ſituations after death were the conſequences of their different lives upon earth.—He ſhewed him laſtly the impoſ- 26.

23. This is accommodated to a common opinion among the Jews, that Paradiſe, and Gehenna, were ſo ſituated, that it was eaſy to ſee from one into the other.

ſibility of any connection between thoſe two different ſtates, in which Lazarus and he were now placed.

27. 28. Since that was impoſſible, the rich man next begged, that Abraham would ſend Lazarus to warn his brethren against following his
29. bad example. Abraham told him, they had Moſes and the prophets as conſtant monitors.

30. But he again urged, that if one went from the dead, they might repent.

31. To this Abraham finally anſwered, that God's ordinary means were fully ſufficient for all mankind; and that if men were prejudiced, and hardened in their ſins, they would not even be converted by a man ſent from the dead.

CHAP. XVII.

1. 2. Jeſus, on another occaſion, inſtructing his diſciples with regard to the great points of *giving*, and *taking* offence, thus ſpoke. Such is the nature of human things, that the world muſt abound with offences of various kinds. Men will be deluded, and drawn away by falſe opinions, and wicked practices. But notwithſtanding all theſe things muſt happen in the courſe of human affairs; yet that is no excuſe for thoſe wicked perſons, through whom they happen. He who ſeduces others to ſin, ſhall have the moſt grievous of all
3. ſins to anſwer for himſelf. Conſider well therefore every action you do in this light; and be always fearful of corrupting the manners of others, by any wicked practices of your own.

Again, as to *taking offence*, be not rigid in exacting all the ſatiſfaction, that may be due. Gently rebuke the offender; and if he

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31. This very beautiſul parable is told with all the circumſtances of eaſtern imagery. The ſoul carried to heaven by angels—the gulph between—Lazarus's lying in Abraham's boſom, are all Jewiſh images; and have great beauty in deſcription. The laſt circumſtance is illuſtrated by a paſſage from Joſephus: Θανοντας ημας Αβρααμ, και Ισαακ, και Ιακωβ υποδεξονται εις τους κολπους αυτων.——The requeſt of a man to be ſent from the dead is well explained by Bp. Sherlock, Vol. III. Ser. 2.

make

make a conceſſion, immediately forgive him. Nay, however frequent his offences may be; yet if his penitence continually follow them, let your heart be open to forgive. 4.

On another occaſion the diſciples begged Jeſus to increaſe their faith. 5.

Jeſus told them, it was a prayer, which all Chriſtians ought to make. Faith, ſaid he, like a grain ſown in the ground, ſhould always be of an increaſing nature: and ſuch a faith might obtain any thing from the throne of grace.——Only of one thing be aſſured, that when you have obtained this great Chriſtian virtue, and all others, as far as you can; yet ſtill you ought to have the moſt humble opinion of yourſelves. When the ſervant does his duty, ſhall his Lord thank him? By no means. He has done only his duty.——So you, when you have attained what height of perfection you can, muſt ſtill ſay, We are unprofitable ſervants: we have done merely what was our duty to do. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

Jeſus, after this, proceeding in his journey to Jeruſalem, paſſed through Samaria, and Galilee. As he approached a village in thoſe parts, he met ten lepers, who were excluded from their place of abode on account of their uncleanneſs†. Theſe perſons, knowing Jeſus, ſtood at a diſtance, and begged with a loud voice, that he would have mercy on them. Jeſus bad them go, and ſhew themſelves to the prieſt. As they went, they felt themſelves healed. On this, one of them, who was a Samaritan, impreſſed with a ſenſe of gratitude, returned to Jeſus; and falling down at his feet, glorified his power; and the goodneſs of God. Jeſus inquiring after the other 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16.

† See the Levitical law.

nine;

17. 18. nine; and finding none of them had been awakened into a ſenſe of
19. gratitude, but this ſingle ſtranger; commended his faith; and told him, it would lead him to a much higher ſalvation, than the cure of a bodily diſeaſe.

20. 21. Sometime after, the Phariſees aſking Jeſus, When the kingdom of the Meſſiah ſhould come? he told them, it would never appear in the manner, in which they expected it, with worldly pomp, and oſtentation.——The kingdom of the Meſſiah, ſaid he, is eſtabliſhed in the hearts of men.

22. Jeſus took this opportunity to tell his diſciples, that they muſt not hope to ſee a continuation of thoſe peaceable days, which they
23. now enjoyed; but muſt expect to meet with many calamities; and among other difficulties, muſt guard againſt the deluſions of impoſ-
24. tors. For tho the goſpel, ſaid he, ſhall hereafter be propagated with
25. ſurprizing quickneſs; yet the Son of man muſt firſt ſuffer great in-
26. 27. dignity, and cruelty from the Jews. Then ſhall come on thoſe calamitous times, which ſhall be as ſudden, as they will be dreadful. As in the days of Noah, men were throughly engaged in all the
28. 29. buſineſs of life, till the flood unexpectedly deſtroyed them——and as in the days of Lot, the inhabitants of Sodom were unconcerned,

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18. The expreſſion in the original is σεσωκε σε; to which I have ventured to give this interpretation. Commentators have generally referred his being ſaved to the *cure of the leproſy*.—But, in the firſt place, the word σωζω as often ſignifies to ſave from the *effect of ſin*, as from any other danger. See Matt. i. 21.——And ſecondly, this leper was *already* cured of his bodily diſeaſe, as the others had been, without any mention of *faith*: which was ſometimes, on other occaſions, tho not often, the caſe.—So that one ſhould ſuppoſe his *faith* was to ſave him from *ſomething* from which he had not *yet* been ſaved.—As the diſciples alſo had juſt been begging an increaſe of faith, this example came in very properly to ſhew, how it led from one degree to another—from the cure of a bodily diſorder, to everlaſting happineſs.

21. Εντος; υμων *may* be tranſlated *among you*: but the generality of commentators give it this more evangelical ſenſe.

24. This verſe is ſuppoſed by ſome to relate to the deſtruction of Jeruſalem.

till the great event came on—ſo ſhall it be in that calamity, which 30.
is hanging over the Jewiſh nation. Let every man therefore, re- 31. 32.
membring the error of Lot's wife, take the moſt direct, and ſpeedy
means of eſcape.

But principally, added Jeſus, let this ſudden eſcape carry your 33.
thoughts ſtill farther to thoſe ſimilar events of death, and judgment;
which ſhall be equally unavoidable; and equally undiſtinguiſhing.
A man's loſs, and gain will not then be eſtimated on worldly prin- 34. 35 36.
ciples; nor his ſecurity on worldly calculations.

CHAP. XVIII.

But in theſe, ſaid Jeſus, and in all your other diſtreſſes, be fervent
in prayer to God. Fervent prayer will always weigh with your 1.
heavenly Father.—On this head Jeſus ſpoke the following parable.

In a certain city lived a corrupt judge, who regarded neither 2.
God, nor man. In the ſame city lived alſo an oppreſſed widow, 3.
who brought her complaint before him. But tho the juſtice of 4. 5.
her ſuit had no weight with the judge; her aſſiduity moved him.
This woman, and her cauſe, ſaid he to himſelf, are matters of no
concern to me; yet my own quiet is; and I will hear her caſe,
merely to avoid her importunity.——If then an unjuſt judge, ſaid 6. 7. 8.

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34. The paſſage from this verſe, ſeems more applicable to the general judgment, than to the ſiege of Jeruſalem. Indeed moſt commentators interpret it in this ſenſe: (ſee the notes on Matt. xxiv. 31, and on Mark xiii. 32.) Of the laſt verſe of this chapter I have given no explanation; becauſe connected, at leaſt, as it is, I do not clearly underſtand it. Dr. Clarke ſays, *Wherever the unbelieving Jews, and wicked men are, there alſo will the judgment of God follow them.*—Dr. Whitby ſays, *Wherever the Jews are, there alſo will the ſword of the Romans, whoſe enſign is the eagle, be ready to devour them.* The reader may take which of theſe explanations he chuſes: I like neither of them.—Perhaps indeed the expreſſion, *where the carcaſe is, there will the eagles be gathered together*, may be only, as ſome have interpreted it, a proverb, ſignifying, that *ſimilar cauſes, will always produce ſimilar effects:* ſo that when the diſciples ſay, *Where Lord?* or *Of what deſtruction do you ſpeak?* Jeſus's anſwer might admit the following explanation: "*I ſpoke firſt of the deſtruction of Jeruſalem; and afterwards led your attention to the "laſt great day: for wickedneſs ſhall always both here, and hereafter produce miſery.*" For myſelf, I think this the beſt ſenſe.

Jeſus,

Jeſus, will hear the petition of a ſuitor, on ſo vile a motive; ſhall not a righteous God attend to the prayers of his faithful ſervants? Tho he may not immediately grant their requeſts, he will always attend to their diſtreſſes; and ſooner, or later, relieve them.——On this great occaſion however, added Jeſus, on which I now ſpeak —the approaching ruin of the Jews—there are very few, whoſe faith ſhall make them the objects of God's mercy.

9. To this inſtruction, which Jeſus had juſt given his diſciples on *fervency of prayer*, he added the following parable, as an *exhortation to humility*; which he addreſſed to ſome of his hearers, whom he knew to have too high an opinion of themſelves.

10. Two men, ſaid he, happened to meet at the temple. The one
11. was a Phariſee; the other a publican. The former, full of ſpiritual pride, and ſelf-importance, profeſſed his innocent life; and thanked
12. God for his ſuperiority over ſuch a wretch, as ſtood before him. My faſts, ſaid he, are frequent; my offerings to God, abundant.——
13. The publican, in the mean time, ſtanding in a diſtant corner of the temple; and ſcarce daring to lift his eyes to heaven, ſmote his
14. breaſt, ſaying, God be merciful to me a ſinner!——And yet added Jeſus, this deſpiſed publican returned from the temple, with a juſter ſenſe of his duty, than the boaſting Phariſee: for ſelf-exaltation is in the higheſt manner diſpleaſing to God.

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11. *The Phariſee ſtood, and prayed thus with himſelf.* It ſhould be tranſlated, *The Phariſee ſtood by himſelf, and prayed thus:* that is, he would not deign to come near the publican, for fear of pollution. See Iſa. lxv. 5.

12. The tythes, on which the Phariſee valued himſelf, were the temple-offerings.

14. *Every one*, ſays the text, *that exalteth himſelf, ſhall be abaſed.* It is worth remarking, that our bleſſed Saviour repeats this maxim, almoſt in theſe very words, three ſeveral times. Matt. xxii. 12: and again Luke xiv. 11: and in many other places the ſame ſentiment is expreſſed. From this let us judge of it's importance.

Jeſus

Jesus inculcated humility also on another occasion. Some 15.
Jews, in the neighbourhood, bringing their children to him, desired he would bless them. But the disciples, conceiving this to be an unseasonable interruption, rebuked their forwardness. Jesus however ordering the children to be called; laid his hands 16. 17.
upon them; and then turning to his followers, These, said he, are the true emblems of my disciples. He only, who has the innocence, and purity of a little child, is qualified to be a member of my kingdom.

Soon after, a young man of some distinction, coming to Jesus, 18.
and accosting him by the name of *good master*, desired to be informed, how he should attain eternal life?——Jesus, observing 19.
from his manner of address, that he had acknowledged him to be the Messiah; first questioned him about the commandments; 20. 21.
and finding, that he had a good account of himself to give on these points; told him, it was so far well. But now, said he, I 22.
must put your faith to a trial. Sell what you have, and give it to the poor; and trust me for your reward in heaven.——This 23.
injunction decided the affair. The young man was very rich; and not expecting to be put to such a proof, abruptly retired.

Jesus, on this, observed the very great difficulty of a rich man's 24. 25.
being properly disposed to receive the gospel: and when his dis- 26.
ciples expressed their concern at what he said, he added, that he 27.
spoke only of man unassisted by divine grace. By God's grace, said he, all the bad dispositions of our hearts, and all the temptations of the world, may be conquered.

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21. See the parallel place, Matt. xix. 16.

28. Peter could not help on this occaſion reminding Jeſus, in his zeal, that he, and his fellow-diſciples had left all, and followed him.

29. 30. Jeſus never gave ſelf-exaltation the praiſe it demanded; but contented himſelf with ſaying, that no man gave up the things of this world for the ſake of religion; who ſhould not even in this life receive abundantly more comfort, than he could have received in poſſeſſing them; and in the world to come, everlaſting happineſs.

31. 32. 33. After this preparation, Jeſus told his diſciples, ſtill more plainly, than he had yet done, that their preſent journey to Jeruſalem ſhould end in his being treated with every indignity, which his enemies could invent; and that finally, he ſhould be put to death; but on the third day, he aſſured them, he ſhould riſe again.——
34. The diſciples however, notwithſtanding this plain language, had no clear conception of what he meant.

35. Jeſus had now arrived near Jericho; where a blind man ſitting
36. by the road-ſide, and hearing a multitude paſs along, inquired
37. the occaſion of it. Some of the croud telling him, that Jeſus of
38. Nazareth was paſſing that way; he cried with a loud voice, and calling him by the name of Jeſus, the ſon of David, begged, he
39. would have mercy on him. The people rebuked his importunity;
40. but he ſtill continued his cries, till Jeſus, coming to the place,
41. ordered him to be brought to him; and aſked him, what he wiſhed for? To this the blind man anſwered, Lord, that I may receive
42. my ſight. Jeſus immediately reſtoring him, ſaid, his great faith had procured that bleſſing for him. He then followed Jeſus
43. with the reſt of the people; and was joined by the whole croud, in praiſing God for ſo wonderful a mercy.

Soon

Soon after Jeſus had left Jericho, a rich man, whoſe name 1. 2. 3.
was Zaccheus, a chief tax-gatherer, was greatly deſirous to ſee him. But not being able, as he was a man of low ſtature, to ſatisfy his curioſity in the midſt of a croud; he climbed into a 4.
tree, near the road.—Jeſus coming to the place, looked up, and 5. 6. 7. 8.
bad him come down; telling him, he ſhould go with him to his houſe.

Some of the Jews ſeeing Jeſus there, took great offence at his freedom with a perſon of ſo notorious a life, as Zaccheus had been ſuppoſed to lead. The event however ſhewed, how unjuſtly they judged. For Zaccheus, on this intercourſe with Jeſus, became ſo intirely convinced of the wickedneſs of his paſt life; that he ſtood forth before all the people there aſſembled, and made open confeſſion of his ſins; declaring, that for the future, he intended to lead a new life. The oppreſſions he had been guilty of, he would recompence four-fold; and to make *amends*, where he could not make *reſtitution*, he would give half of what he poſſeſſed to the poor.——Jeſus told him, that his repentance, and faith ſhould 9.
ſecure to him the gracious promiſes made to Abraham, his father. And then turning to his adverſaries, he added, You ſee the end 10.
of the Son of man's coming upon earth: he came to ſave that which was loſt.

Jeſus by this time, drawing near Jeruſalem; and obſerving that 11.
many of thoſe, who followed him, had entertained thoughts of his intending, on his arrival there, to attempt ſome temporal deliverance, ſpoke the following parable to ſhew them the nature of his kingdom——that it was intirely of a ſpiritual kind——that all mankind were to paſs firſt through a ſtate of trial——and that afterwards, at the conſummation of all things, he ſhould come in his glory, and call them to an account, before they paſſed into a ſtate of happineſs, or of miſery.

12. A certain prince, ſaid he, inheriting a kingdom, went to receive
13. his title to it from his principal lord; and calling his ſervants,
he gave them money, which he ordered them to improve againſt
14. his return. The generality of the people, in the mean time, taking
offence at him, rejected his government.

15. Having ſucceeded in his deſign, he returned; and called his
16. ſeveral ſervants before him. The firſt had improved the ſingle
17. pound, he had received, to ten. At this his lord expreſſing his
18. ſatisfaction, gave him the command of ten cities. A ſecond, who
had made only half the improvement, received only half the re-
19. 20. ward. But at length came one, who brought with him the ori-
ginal ſum, wrapped up in a napkin, which he had put to no uſe,
21. telling his lord, that knowing his auſterity, he was afraid, and
had brought back the money juſt as he had received it.

22. Out of your own mouth, returned his lord, will I judge you.
23. If you knew my diſpoſition to be ſuch, why did you not endeavour
24. to procure my favour by putting my money to uſe? Then turning
to thoſe, who ſtood near him, Take the pound, ſaid he, from
him, who has not uſed it; and give it to him, that hath ten
26. pounds. For he, who hath improved properly what he had, ſhall
receive more, and more; while he, who hath neglected his truſt,
however ſmall, ſhall loſe that little, which he already poſſeſſed.
27. And as for thoſe, who rejected my government, let them ſuffer
the puniſhment their rebellion deſerves.

28. 29. 30. Jeſus having now arrived at the mount of Olives, near Bethany,
and Bethphage, ſent two of his diſciples into one of thoſe villages;

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12. Our Saviour ſeems here to have had in view the manner, in which Herod, Archilaus, and other princes, went to Rome, to receive their ſeveral titles from Cæſar.

25. I have left out this verſe; as it is thought to be an interpolation; and is not found in many of the beſt MSS. See Bp. Pearce in loc.

where

where he told them, they ſhould find an aſs's colt; which he ordered them to bring to him; inſtructing them what to ſay to 31.
the owner of it, if they met with any difficulty. Every thing 32. 33. 34. 35.
happening as Jeſus had ſaid, they brought the colt, and laying their cloaths upon it, ſet him thereon.

In this humble triumph he deſcended the mount of Olives 36. 37. 38.
towards Jeruſalem; the multitude ſpreading flowers, and garments before him; praiſing God for all the mighty works he had done; and crying, Bleſſed is the king, that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace and glory attend him!

It happened, that ſome of the Phariſees being among the croud, 39.
took great offence at their rejoicing; and deſired Jeſus to check their clamour. But he gave them to underſtand, that it was a very pro- 40.
per occaſion for the people to teſtify their joy: and that if theſe ſhould be checked, others would riſe up to celebrate this triumph.

As Jeſus deſcended the mount of Olives, he had a view of the 41. 42.
whole city of Jeruſalem, ſpread in all it's ſplendor before him. The recollection of it's approaching deſtruction moved him with compaſſion. He ſtood over it, and wept; lamenting it's hardened, impenitent ſtate, which prevented every intention of mercy. The days, 43.
ſaid he, are coming, when thine enemies ſhall ſurround thee; and ſtraiten thee on every ſide; and lay thee level with the ground— 44.
blind as thou art to all the approaching ſigns of thy diſſolution.

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38. See a note on Matt. xxi. 11.

40. The paſſage in the original, *The ſtones would immediately cry out*; is a ſtrong figurative expreſſion; conveying, I think, the ſenſe I have given.

43. With what exact particularity this prophecy was fulfilled, Joſephus informs us. To incompaſs the city with a wall was thought an impracticable work. Titus however, animating his ſoldiers, compleated it, and literally *kept the inhabitants in on every ſide*.

Jeſus

45. Jesus then entring the city, alighted at the temple: and being greatly offended at finding the courts of the Gentiles filled like a
46. market, with buyers, and sellers, he drove them all out; saying, It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer; but you have made it a den of thieves.

47. After this, Jesus continued teaching in the temple, during the day; and in the evening retired to Bethany.

In the mean time the chief priests, and Scribes, assembling to-
48. gether, consulted how they might destroy him. But not daring to attack him openly, because of the people, who held him in such
CHAP. XX. reverence; they attempted to get matter of accusation against him
1. from his discourses.

2. With this view, they desired, he would inform them, by what authority he had entered the city in triumph, and driven the traders out of the temple?

3. Jesus told them, he would answer their question by asking them
4. another. What think you, said he, of the baptism of John? Was it of divine, or of human authority?

5. This question included an answer: for whatever the authority of John was, such also was the authority of Jesus. The Scribes saw the difficulty; and were confounded with it. If, said they among themselves, we shall allow the authority of John to be *divine*, we
6. can give no reason, why we do not believe in Jesus. But if we call it *human*, we shall draw upon ourselves the resentment of the
7. people, who are all persuaded, that John was a prophet. They were reduced to the necessity therefore of saying, they could not

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46. Isa. lvi. 7. and Jerem. vii. 11. See also the parallel place in Matthew.

tell.

tell. Neither then, ſaid Jeſus, ſhall I tell you, by what authority I do theſe things. 8.

He then ſhewed them, in a very ſevere parable, that God would certainly puniſh them in the end, for rejecting all his calls of mercy; and would adopt the Gentiles in their room. 9.

A certain man, ſaid he, planted a vineyard; and being about to take a journey, let it out to huſbandmen. At the ſeaſon, he ſent a ſervant to demand the fruits: but the huſbandmen treated him roughly, and refuſed his demand. After him he ſent other ſervants; but with the ſame ſucceſs. At length he determined to ſend his ſon; to whom he doubted not they would pay reſpect. On the contrary, when they ſaw him, imagining that by his death the inheritance ſhould be theirs, they fell upon him, and killed him. What therefore, ſaid he, ſhall the lord of the vineyard do to thoſe wicked huſbandmen? He will certainly come with power, and deſtroy them; and call in other labourers into his vineyard, who ſhall give him the fruits in their ſeaſon. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16.

From the anſwer which the chief prieſts, and Scribes made to Jeſus, it was plain, they underſtood the meaning of the parable.

Jeſus then aſked them, how they underſtood that paſſage in the pſalmiſt, *The ſtone which the builders rejected, is become the head-ſtone of the corner?* thus pointing out to them, that as the corner-ſtone united the two ſides of a building together, ſo ſhould Chriſt unite Jews, and Gentiles in one church—at the ſame time ſhewing them, that the prophet conſidered *them* as the builders, who rejected that ſtone. 17.

He then added, that he, who ſtumbled at it, ſhould be injured: but thoſe impenitent people, on whom it ſhould fall, ſhould be ground to powder. 18.

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9. See a note on Matt. xxi. 33.

The

19. 20. The chief-priefts however, angry as they were, durft attempt nothing openly againft him. All they attempted, was, to infnare him in his difcourfe: and for this purpofe they employed artful men to circumvent him.

It was, at that time, a great queftion among the Jews, whether, as a free people by their defcent from Abraham, they ought to acknowledge any foreign prince by paying tribute to him?

21. 22. This queftion fome, who were employed by the chief-priefts, brought to Jefus; feigning themfelves, at the fame time, to be intirely devoted to his opinion, for which they had the greateft reverence. The difficulty of the queftion lay in making Jefus offend either the Jews on one hand; or the Romans on the other.

23. 24. Jefus knowing their defign, bad them fhew him the tribute-money. On their producing a Roman coin, which was current money among the Jews; he afked them, Whofe image, and infcription it bore? They anfwered, Cæfar's.

25. Give then to Cæfar, faid Jefus, the things that are Cæfar's;

26. and to God, the things that are God's. By an anfwer fo full of wifdom, his enemies were difconcerted, and retired in filence.

27. After them came a body of Sadduces. This fect denied a future ftate: and brought a queftion to Jefus, as they imagined, of peculiar

28. difficulty. Mafter, faid they, Mofes commands, that if a man

29. 30. 31. 32. die without children, his brother fhall take his wife, and preferve the family. Now we have an inftance of feven brethren, who all,

33. one after another, in obedience to this law, married the fame woman. We defire to learn therefore, if there be a future ftate, which of the feven brethren fhall hereafter claim the woman?

34. In anfwer to this queftion, Jefus firft fhewed them the impropriety of judging of the next world by the affairs of this. In this

35. 36. 37. world, faid he, marriage is neceffary: but a ftate of immortality

renders

renders a ſucceſſion of inhabitants needleſs.—And as to your principal queſtion, he added, if you believe the ſcriptures, you muſt alſo believe in a future ſtate. For you cannot ſuppoſe, that God, who ſtiles himſelf the God of Abraham, of Iſaac, and of Jacob; 38.
would ſtile himſelf the God of perſons, who did not exiſt.

This drew from ſome of the Scribes, who were of a party oppo- 39.
ſite to that of the Sadducees, great commendation. And from this 40.
time, none of his oppoſers took the courage to aſk him any further queſtions.

Jeſus then aſked them a queſtion. How is Chriſt, ſaid he, 41. 42. 43.
David's ſon? David plainly acknowledges him his ſuperior, ſaying, 44.
The Lord ſaid unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy foot-ſtool.

To this queſtion receiving no anſwer, he turned to the 45.
people, and ſaid; Avoid that deſire of ſuperiority, that religious 46.
pomp, and hypocritical ſolemnity, to which you ſee the Scribes addicted. For a pretence they make long prayers; while they are guilty of every kind of extortion. But their hypocriſy only increaſes their guilt.

CHAP. XXI.

As Jeſus was leaving the temple, he obſerved many people
throwing their offerings into the treaſury: and among them a poor 1. 2.
widow, who threw in a mere trifle. But even that trifle, Jeſus 3.
obſerved to his diſciples, was more acceptable in the ſight of God, 4.
than many of the richeſt offerings: for God did not rate a charitable action by the greatneſs of the gift; but by the diſpoſition of the giver.

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38. By a ſlight alteration in the text, the words, *for all live unto him*, are changed into, *all, who live, are his*; which makes the argument much firmer. See Bowyer's conjec.

1. See Mark xii. 4.

4. See Mark xii. 44.

5. Some of the diſciples afterwards obſerving the great ſplendor, with which the temple was adorned; and particularly the amazing
6. bulk of many of the ſtones; Jeſus told them, that the days were approaching, when not one ſtone, in all that building, ſhould be left upon another.

7. This led the diſciples to enquire into the time of this event; and to aſk, what ſign ſhould precede it?

8. In the firſt place, ſaid Jeſus, take care, that you be not deceived by any pretended deliverers, many of which ſhall ariſe under the
9. 10. 11. title of Meſſiahs. But, inſtead of any deliverance, things ſhall come to great extremity. You ſhall hear of commotions, wars, famines, and every kind of diſtreſs. Be not however terrified: theſe
12. things muſt needs happen. Nay even before theſe general calamities ariſe, you muſt experience great oppoſition, and perſecution
13. for the ſake of the truth: but it will be the more eſtabliſhed through
14. your perſevering teſtimony.

Nor be ſolicitous on theſe trying occaſions, how you ſhall
15. anſwer your oppoſers. The Spirit of God ſhall direct you. Only
16. 17. ſettle this well in your minds, that the oppoſition you muſt meet with, ſhall be very great. The prejudices of men ſhall over-power their natural affections. You ſhall be hated of the world; and
18. 19. many of you even put to death. But let it be the great ground of your reſignation, that you ſhall always be under the protection of God.

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5. *How it was adorned with gifts.* Tacitus (Hiſt. v. 8.) ſpeaks of it's extraordinary wealth.

18. Bp. Pearce, and others explain this verſe as intimating, that they ſhould be ſecure from the miſchiefs of the Jewiſh war. This does not ſeem ſatisfactory. It ſeems rather to be a proverbial expreſſion intimating not any particular deliverance; but that they ſhould always be ſafe under the protection of God. Many of them ſuffered martyrdom; but ſtill this did not annihilate the promiſe.

When

When Jeruſalem ſhall be ſurrounded by a heathen army, then know, that it's deſtruction approacheth. Then let every one take the prudent means of eſcape; and pray to God to aſſiſt his flight. For among all the inſtances of ruin, and deſtruction, that ever happened in the world, this ſurely ſhall be the greateſt. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24.

Nor only ſhall the city of Jeruſalem be deſtroyed; but the whole Jewiſh government ſhall be diſſolved; and the Jews ſhall become a ſtanding monument of the eſtabliſhment of the Meſſiah's kingdom; and a confirmation of the truth of my promiſes.——As ſurely therefore as you judge of the coming of ſummer by the budding of the leaves; ſo ſurely may you judge of the approach of theſe events, by the ſigns I have given you. Heaven and earth are not more ſtedfaſt, and eſtabliſhed. Even this generation ſhall ſee them fulfilled. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33.

But to improve theſe great events to the utmoſt, let them carry your eyes forwards to thoſe *ſimilar* events of *death*, and *judgment*. Sit looſe to the things of this world; and be always ready to receive your heavenly Father's call; which may be as ſudden and unexpected, as the event I have been declaring: and let it be your conſtant prayer, that you may be found worthy, at the laſt day, to ſtand before the Son of man. 34. 35. 36.

Thus Jeſus continued preaching in the temple, during the day, where he was always attended by great crouds of people; and at night he retired to the mount of Olives. 37. 38.

CHAP. XXII.

In the mean time, the Scribes, and chief prieſts were eagerly bent on putting him to death: but they feared to make any open attempt, 1. 2.

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24. *They ſhall fall by the edge of the ſword, and be led away captive:* Luke is here more full than the other evangeliſts. In confirmation of this paſſage, we are aſſured by Joſephus, that eleven hundred thouſand Jews were deſtroyed by the ſword, and near a hundred thouſand taken priſoners.

during the paſſover; as the people univerſally had him in ſuch eſteem.
3. While they held conferences on this ſubject, it fell out, that Judas Iſcariot, who had now reſolved on the deſign of betraying his maſter,
4. 5. 6. went to them, and offered his ſervices to this purpoſe. So unexpected an offer greatly pleaſed them, as it anſwered all their ends; Judas undertaking, for a ſum of money, to betray him into their hands, at a time, when the multitude could have no intimation of their intention.

7. 8. 9. While this deſign was carrying on, Jeſus had retired with his diſciples to the mount of Olives; from whence he ſent two of them into the city, to provide a place, where he might eat the paſſover.
10. As you enter the city, ſaid he, you ſhall ſee a man carrying a pitcher
11. of water; follow him, and inquire at the houſe he enters, for the
12. gueſt-chamber; and the maſter of it will immediately ſhew you a
13. proper room. This was accordingly done, and the paſſover made ready.

14. 15. As Jeſus ſat down, with his diſciples, he told them, he had
16. greatly deſired to eat this laſt paſſover with them; as it was a type,
17. now about to be fulfilled. He wiſhed alſo, he ſaid, to drink this
18. laſt paſchal cup with them; which he gave among them telling them, that type alſo was now compleated, and ſhould thence forward ceaſe.

19. In the room of theſe paſchal rites Jeſus inſtituted his laſt ſupper. He took bread, and breaking it, delivered it among them, ſaying,
20. Eat this in remembrance of my death. Then taking the cup, he

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16. *Until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God*—that is, until the type be fulfilled on the eſtabliſhment of the goſpel.

17. St. Matthew mentions the bread, before the cup. We may conclude therefore it was among matters of indifference, which was taken firſt.

20. None of the evangeliſts mentions ſo plainly, as St. Luke does, the ſubſtitution of the ſacramental ſupper in the room of the paſſover.

ordered

ordered them to drink it likewiſe in the ſame ſolemn manner, in remembrance of his blood, which was ſhed for the ſins of men.

The Son of man, ſaid he, muſt ſuffer, as hath been foretold. But 21. 22.
woe to that perſon, by whom he is betrayed—and yet that perſon is now among you.

This drew on a general inquiry round the table: yet ſo ſlightly 23. 24.
were the diſciples affected, on the whole; and ſo little did they underſtand the nature, and intention of Jeſus's paſſion; or the high offence, about which he was inquiring, that they ſoon after entered into a diſpute with ſome warmth upon their ſeveral pretenſions to greatneſs, when the Meſſiah's kingdom ſhould be eſtabliſhed.

Jeſus in order to diſpel theſe undue prejudices, reminded them 25.
of the difference between his kingdom, and the kingdoms of this world. They who preſide over the kingdoms of this world, ſaid he, exerciſe unbounded power under gracious titles. But among you, 26.
let every one, who wiſhes to be exalted, ſeek his exaltation from humility. Imitate the example, which I ſet you; and as you have 27. 28.
followed me through all my labours, and temptations on earth; ſo 29. 30.
ſhall you be members of my ſpiritual kingdom; and receive hereafter it's bleſſed diſtinctions.——But in the mean time you muſt expect to 31.
undergo great trials, and ſufferings.

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25. *Called benefactors.* Antiochus, king of Syria, took the title of *Euergetes*, or benefactor: ſo did Demetrius, and ſome others.

30. There is no occaſion, I think to conſider the phraſe, *judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael*, in a literal ſenſe. It is perhaps better to conſider it only, as a lofty eaſtern expreſſion. See a note on Matt. xix. 28.

31. The whole of this ſpeech *ſeems* to be addreſſed to Peter; yet the former part of it, contained in verſe thirty-one, includes all the diſciples. The word in the original, is, υμας, not σε.

Then

32. Then addreſſing himſelf to Peter, he added, that he had particularly prayed for him: and bad him, when his faith was eſtabliſhed, comfort each weaker Chriſtian.

33. Peter with great vehemence anſwered his maſter, that he was ready to ſuffer any extremity for his ſake.

34. But Jeſus checked his forwardneſs by telling him, that the cock ſhould not crow that night, till he had thrice denied him.

35. Jeſus then thought it proper to remind his diſciples again of the very great trials that were approaching. When I ſent you out, ſaid he, to preach the goſpel; all was ſmooth, and eaſy before you.
36. 37. But now you muſt arm yourſelves againſt great perſecution. For every thing that I have told you of my ſufferings, which ſhall be the beginning of yours, ſhall now be ſpeedily accompliſhed.

38. The diſciples miſtaking his meaning, as if he wiſhed them to arm literally in his defence; produced two ſwords. But Jeſus checked their miſtake.

39. From the paſchal ſupper, he retired with his diſciples to the
40. mount of Olives; and bidding them pray to God to aſſiſt them in
41. this great approaching trial; he withdrew a few paces; and
42. kneeling down, *Father*, ſaid he, *if thou be willing, remove this cup*
43. 44. *from me—nevertheleſs, not my will; but thine be done.* As he thus

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38. We are rather ſurprized at finding two ſwords among them: but the road from Galilee might be infeſted with robbers; (many of the roads about Jeruſalem, we know, were,) and theſe two ſwords might probably be carried by way of defence. One of theſe ſwords, it afterwards appears, was Peter's. John xviii. 10. Or perhaps they carried theſe two ſwords, as a guard againſt wild beaſts, which alſo infeſted that country.

44. There are inſtances of bloody ſweats ariſing from agonizing conflicts. Dr. Mead in his Med. ſac. cap. xiii. ſays, Contingere interdum poros ex multo, ant fervido ſpiritu, uſque adeo dilatari, ut etiam exeat ſanguis per eos, fiatque ſudor ſanguineus.——And in Thuanus's hiſtory, we have an inſtance: A gentleman, ſays he, under the apprehenſion of being hanged——tam indignæ mortis vehementi metu adeo concuſſum animo fuiſſe, ut ſanguineum ſudorem toto corpore funderet. Thuan. Hiſt. Lib. II.

prayed

prayed earneſtly, he fell into an agony, and drops of ſweat like blood, fell from him; and there appeared angels from heaven ſtrengthening him. When he roſe from prayer, he returned to his 45.
diſciples; and finding them aſleep, he rebuked them for their un- 46.
concern in an hour of ſuch diſtreſs.

While he was thus ſpeaking, a multitude of armed men appeared, 47.
with Judas at their head, who went up to Jeſus, and ſaluted him.
Jeſus mildly expoſtulated with him for ſo baſe an act: while the diſ- 48. 49.
ciples in the mean time preparing to defend their maſter, one of them
drew a ſword, and wounded a ſervant of the high-prieſt. But Jeſus 50. 51.
turning to them, forbad this hoſtile appearance; and healed the man. 52.
He then aſked the officers, who came to apprehend him, what oc-
caſion there was for all that caution, and ſecrecy? I have been daily, 53.
ſaid he, teaching in the temple, and no man made any attempt againſt
me——But this is the hour, in which the powers of darkneſs are
ſuffered to prevail.

From the mount of Olives, the ſoldiers carried Jeſus to the high- 54.
prieſt's palace; where a council of the principal Jews aſſembled to
examine him.

In the mean time, Peter followed at a diſtance; and entring the 55.
palace with the croud, ſat down in the hall, among the ſervants, at
the fire. While he was there, three perſons, one after another, 56. 57. 58.
challenged him as belonging to Jeſus. But he denied each time; 59. 60.
declaring with great vehemence, that he knew him not.
Soon after the cock crew; and Jeſus, who was in the ſame room, 61.
turning round, gave Peter a look, which brought him at once to

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54. Jeſus was now in the hands of the Roman ſoldiers. See a note on John xviii. 12.

himſelf.

62. himſelf. He retired to a private place; and poured out his diſtreſs in a flood of tears.

63. 64. 65. While this paſſed, they who guarded Jeſus, treated him with every indignity; blinding his eyes, ſtriking him on the face, and bidding him diſcover who ſtruck him.

66. About midnight the chief prieſts, and Scribes, being all aſſem-
67. 68. bled, Jeſus was brought before them, and aſked, whether he profeſſed himſelf to be the Meſſiah?

Jeſus told them, that as nothing he could ſay to them at preſent,
69. would have any effect, he muſt refer them to that future time, when they ſhould ſee an awful proof of his power.

70. They all immediately conſidered this as implying his being the Son of God: and upon their urging him, he declared it plainly.

71. On this they all cried out, What further need have we of witneſs? We ourſelves can now teſtify his blaſphemy.

CHAP. XXIII.

1. 2. From the palace therefore of the high-prieſt, they immediately carried him before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor; accuſing him of ſetting up pretenſions to royalty, and exciting the people againſt the government.

3. Pilate accordingly aſked him, whether he had any pretenſions to be king of the Jews? To this Jeſus anſwered, that his pretenſions were merely in a ſpiritual ſenſe: not in that, in which they accuſed him.

4. A very ſhort examination convinced the Roman governor of the ſlightneſs of the accuſation againſt him. He told the chief

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66. The text ſays, *as ſoon as it was day*: that is according to the Jewiſh mode of reckoning, as ſoon as midnight was paſſed.

prieſts

priefts therefore, that he faw nothing criminal in the perfon, they had brought before him.

This only produced more eagernefs, on their part. In vehement language they affured Pilate, that he had ftirred up the people to fedition, through the whole country, from Galilee, even to Jerufalem. 5.

Pilate hearing the name of Galilee, afked, whether Jefus were a Galilean? and finding that he belonged to Herod's jurifdiction, he fent him, in compliment, to that prince; who happened to be at that time in Jerufalem. 6. 7.

Herod was glad of an opportunity, which he had long wifhed for, of fatisfying his curiofity with regard to Jefus; of whom he had fo frequently heard. He afked him many queftions therefore; and hoped to have feen fome miracles. But Jefus did not fatisfy his curiofity; nor made any anfwers to the vehement accufations of the chief priefts. Herod therefore, thus difappointed, treated Jefus, in return, with great contempt; and fent him back to Pilate.—The civility however of Pilate, on this occafion, opened a friendly intercourfe between him, and Herod, which had not before fubfifted. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12.

Pilate therefore fitting again in judgment, told the chief priefts, that as both king Herod, and he, had examined Jefus, and found no proof of that guilt, which they had laid to his charge; he fhould after fome flight punifhment, difmifs him. This he propofed to do, agreeably to an annual cuftom they claimed, of having fome capital offender releafed at the paffover. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17.

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7. This was Herod Antipas, who had beheaded John. He was fon of Herod the great, who deftroyed the children; and uncle to Herod Agrippa, who beheaded James, and *was eaten of worms*. Acts xii. He was great uncle to that Agrippa, before whom Paul pleaded.

18. This propoſal however diſpleaſed them; and as they claimed an
19. option in the caſe, they all cried out, deſiring, that a criminal, named Barabbas, who had lately been committed to priſon for ſedition, and murder, might be releaſed.

20. Pilate made a ſecond effort to ſave Jeſus; but what he ſaid was
21. drowned in a general cry, Away with him,—Away with him—Crucify him.

22. 23. 24. 25. After a third attempt to ſave him, Pilate at length gave way; and releaſing Barabbas, paſſed ſentence on Jeſus.

26. On this they led him away immediately to crucify him; obliging one Simon, a Cyrenian, whom they met, and probably ſuppoſed to be his diſciple, to bear his croſs.

27. By this time many people from the city had joined the Roman guard, who were carrying Jeſus to execution. Among them were many women, who followed with great lamentation.

28. 29. 30. Jeſus turning to them, bad them not weep for him; but for themſelves, and their children; Calamities, ſaid he, are coming on this devoted place, beyond any thing of former times: and if the
31. righteous ſhall not eſcape the wicked, what will be the end of the wicked themſelves?

32. 33. The chief prieſts had contrived, with a view to fix the greater diſgrace on Jeſus, to execute two malefactors at the ſame time.

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26. See a note on Matt. xxvii. 32.

27. The chief prieſts were now under no apprehenſion of a reſcue, as Jeſus was in the hands of the Romans.

30. The expreſſions in this, and the foregoing verſe, ſeem only ſtrong figures to denote great calamities. To *call on the mountains to fall on them*, was proverbial.

31. This verſe is obſcure: but we are led, I think, to the ſenſe I have given, from obſerving, that in many parts of ſcripture, *green trees* repreſent *good men*; and *dry trees*, *bad*. See Pſ. i. 3. Pſ. v. 2. 10. Hoſ. xiv. 8. Jer. xvii. 8. Job xv. 32. Ezech. xx. 17. It was alſo proverbial among the Jews, *that two dry ſticks would burn a green one*—that is two bad men would corrupt a good one.

With

With these therefore he was led to a place, called Calvary; where he was crucified between them. *Father, forgive them,* said Jesus, 34. 35. 36. 37.
looking mildly on his executioners, *they know not what they do.*

The soldiers having finished their work, sat down to divide his garments: while the chief priests, and their party, derided him; crying, *He saved others, let him save himself, if he be the Christ, the chosen of God.*

The soldiers then offered him vinegar in derision; and took up their favorite idea of ridicule, *If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.*

An inscription also was placed over him, in different languages, 38.
This is the king of the Jews.

Even one of the thieves, who were crucified with him, reviled 39.
him; crying out, *If thou be Christ, save thyself, and us.*

But the other, who was a person of a different disposition, re- 40. 41.
buked his companion; putting him in mind of his own wretched state—of that guilt, which had deservedly drawn upon them their sufferings——and of the innocence of the holy person, who suffered with them. Then turning to Jesus, he said, *Lord, remember* 42.
me, when thou comest into thy kingdom. Jesus answered, *This day* 43.
shalt thou be with me in paradise.

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43. It is probable, that the penitent thief might have heard of Jesus before, and might have received favourable impressions of him; tho he now probably first saw him. At this awful instant he seems to have been so struck with the greatness, and majesty of his Saviour, then in the act of dying for the sins of the world, that he acknowledged him to be the Messiah; and in a thorough sense of his own wickedness, professed his full faith and trust in his mercies.—He is therefore exactly in the condition of those, who have first had the opportunity of embracing the gospel; and had his sins forgiven, on the plain, and common conditions, which it offers.—This case therefore has no relation to a death-bed repentance, when people have long enjoyed the opportunities of hearing the gospel, and have neglected them.

44. It was about nine in the morning, when Jeſus was nailed to
45. the croſs; and about twelve, a ſupernatural darkneſs coming on, threw an awful gloom over the whole ſcene. About three, the veil of the temple was rent in two parts; by which was figured, that all diſtinction between Jew, and Gentile was now over.

46. At the ſame inſtant Jeſus cried with a loud voice; and ſoon afterwards ſaying *Father, into thy hands I commend my ſpirit*, expired.

47. 48. 49. Great agitation ſeized all, who were preſent on this wonderful occaſion. The women, who had attended Jeſus from Galilee, ſtood afar off in ſilent ſorrow. The people, who had been drawn together by ſo uncommon a ſpectacle, aſtoniſhed beyond utterance, ſmote their breaſts, and retired. While the Roman officer, who attended the execution, ſeeing the many amazing circumſtances, which had accompanied this great event, cried out with terror, Certainly this was a righteous man.

50. 51. In the evening, a perſon of conſequence among the Jews, whoſe name was Joſeph, of the city of Arimathea, who had never con-
52. ſented to the death of Jeſus; but was in his heart inclined to him, as the promiſſed Meſſiah, went to Pilate, and begged the body; which
53. he wrapped in fine linnen, and laid in a new ſepulchre of his own,
54. which had been hewn out of a rock. Nothing more could be done that evening, as it grew late; and the ſabbath approached.

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46. Matthew, and Mark mention the words which Jeſus ſaid, when he cried with a loud voice, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Luke only teſtifies, that he did cry out; and then gives his laſt, dying expreſſion.

The

The women alſo, who had attended Jeſus to the croſs, had the ſame pious intention which Joſeph had, of embalming the body; and having prepared ſpices: came the next day after the ſabbath, very early in the morning, for that purpoſe. But on their arrival at the place, they found the ſtone rolled away, and the body gone. 55. 56. CHAP. XXIV. 1. 2. 3.

While they were under the ſurprize naturally raiſed by ſuch a circumſtance, they were aſtoniſhed at the appearance of two angels, ſtanding near them in bright cloathing; who gently quieting their fears, aſked them, Why they ſought the living among the dead? The angels then told them, their Saviour was not there; but was riſen; and reminded them of what Jeſus himſelf had ſaid in Galilee——that he ſhould be delivered into the hands of ſinners; and be put to death, and riſe again the third day. 4. 5. 6. 7.

This they ſoon recollected; and leaving the ſepulchre, went to inform the diſciples. But on them their relation had no effect. Peter however, to obtain what proof he could, ran immediately to the place; where he found the linen cloaths lying folded up, and the body gone; which began to awaken his faith. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12.

It happened, the ſame day, that two of the diſciples were walking to a village, called Emmaus; about ſix, or ſeven miles from Jeruſalem: and as they were talking of what they had heard, a ſtranger joined them; and aſked the cauſe of that dejection, which appeared in their looks, and diſcourſe? 13. 14. 15. 16. 17.

To this one of them, whoſe name was Cleopas, anſwered, That he imagined a mere paſſenger through Jeruſalem muſt have heard of the wonderful things, which had juſt happened there. 18.

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4. In our tranſlation it is rendered in *ſhining garments*: in the original it is *in garments ſtreaming out light*.

18. Cleopas is ſuppoſed to be the ſame as Alpheas the father of James the leſs, and Judas.

The

19. 20. 21. The ſtranger aſked, What things he meant?
22. 23. 24. They then told him of Jeſus, the great prophet of Nazareth——of their expectations, that he ſhould have delivered Iſrael——of their diſappointment in his death——and laſtly of the wonderful ſtory of his reſurrection from the dead; which had been atteſted by ſome people of their acquaintance, on very probable grounds.

25. 26. The ſtranger then, aſſuming an air of authority, chid their incredulity in matters ſo plainly pointed out by the prophets, as the death of Chriſt, and his glorious exaltation after it.——He then
27. began with Moſes; and touched curſorily on all the prophecies, which related to the Meſſiah.

28. By this time they drew near the village; and the ſtranger ap-
29. peared, as if he meant to go farther. But they, delighted with his converſation, urged the lateneſs of the evening; and prevailed on him to accompany them into the houſe.

30. As they ſat down to meat, he took bread, and giving thanks, brake it, and gave it to them.

31. This action opened their eyes; and they knew him to be their Lord, and maſter. But as their joy was ready to burſt out, he vaniſhed from their ſight.

32. Then comparing together their ſentiments on the road; and recollecting the authority, and wiſdom, with which he had explained the ſcriptures, they were aſtoniſhed, how it was poſſible for them not to have known him before.

33. That they might not delay the communication of this great event, they returned that night to Jeruſalem; and going to the

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25. Mr. Collins pretends to found his doubts on the reſurrection on the little evidence it afforded, even to thoſe who were on the ſpot. If he had acted conſiſtently, he ſhould next have been convinced of the truth of it, from their caution in believing it, and from their being convinced at laſt——The word ανοητοι, which is tranſlated *fools*, means *thoughtleſs*, *inconſiderate*, *inattentive*, or ſome equivalent expreſſion.

eleven

eleven apoſtles, they found that Peter had been communicating 34.
to them an account of his having ſeen Jeſus ſince his reſurrection.
To Peter's evidence they added theirs; and gave a recital of all 35.
the circumſtances of their walk to Emmaus.

While they were thus ſpeaking, Jeſus himſelf ſtood among 36.
them; and ſaid, in his uſual mode of ſalutation, Peace be unto you!

At firſt they were alarmed, and affrighted, ſuppoſing, they had 37.
ſeen a ſpirit. But Jeſus ſoon quieted their fears; aſking them, 38. 39.
why they were afraid? Behold, ſaid he, my hands, and my feet. It is I myſelf. Touch me, and be convinced. A ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones, as you ſee me have.

He then ſhewed them the prints of the nails on his hands, and 40. 41. 42. 43.
feet. And to aſſure them, in a ſtill ſtronger manner, that he was cloathed with a real body, he took food, and eat.

Thus, ſaid he, you ſee the great chain of prophecy, which 44. 45. 46.
I ſo often mentioned to you, while we converſed familiarly together, is now compleat. Chriſt hath ſuffered; and hath riſen from the dead.

Theſe great points Jeſus ſet before them in ſo ſtrong a manner, that they became more inlightened, than they had ever been.

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34. Our Saviour's appearing to St. Peter, before he appeared to any of the other diſciples, is mentioned by St. Paul 1 Cor. xv. 5. *He was ſeen of Cephas; then of the twelve.*

43. Our Saviour's eating, after his reſurrection, ſeems a great difficulty. We have alſo ſimilar inſtances of angels, which occur in the old teſtament. Do the bodies of glorified ſpirits perform animal functions? Or, is the carnal body aſſumed in this world; and depoſited in the next?—tranſmuted, as it were, from ſpiritual to carnal, and from carnal to ſpiritual, according to its ſituation?——We have not however much to do with difficulties of this kind. From what hath been explained to us, we have ground ſufficient to make us acquieſce with patience in the ignorance of ſuch things, as have not been explained.

44. The Jews divided their ſcriptures into three parts—the *law*, the *prophets*, and the *hagiographa*. At the head of this laſt diviſion ſtood the *pſalms*, which therefore denominated the whole.

He

47. 48. He then added, that they were the appointed witneſſes to the world of all theſe things; and that, through their miniſtry, repentance, and remiſſion of ſins ſhould be preached in his name among all nations, from Jeruſalem, where they ſhould begin their
49. miniſterial office. He concluded with ordering them to wait in that city, till they ſhould receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt; which ſhould enable them to perform the great work, to which they had been appointed.

50. He then led them out to the mount of Olives, near Bethany;
51. where laying his hands upon them, and bleſſing them, he was
52. parted from them; and aſcended viſibly to heaven. They followed him with their eyes, in faith, and hope, as he aſcended; and having worſhipped him, returned to Jeruſalem with great joy;
53. praiſing God daily in the temple for all his wonderful works; and waiting, with holy hope, for the completion of their maſter's promiſe.

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50. There is ſome confuſion in the accounts, which the ſeveral evangeliſts give us of the ſcene of our Saviour's actions, after his reſurrection. That he met his diſciples in Galilee, is very plain; and it appears from this paſſage, that he afterwards returned into Judea. We are told the ſame thing alſo in Acts xiii. 31.

53. There is ſomething peculiarly grand, and ſublime, I think, in St. Luke's account of our Saviour's aſcenſion, from the 44th verſe to the end.

END OF THE GOSPEL BY ST. LUKE.

PREFACE

TO

ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN is ſuppoſed to have lived in Judea, till Titus laid ſeige to Jeruſalem. On the foreſight of that great event, he retired to Epheſus; where he continued, till the reign of Domitian. By this prince, in the time of a general perſecution, he was baniſhed to Patmos, an iſland in the Ægean ſea. But, in the ſucceeding year, on the death of Domitian, he returned to Epheſus; where he lived till near the age of an hundred years.

Some interpreters ſuppoſe, as hath been obſerved, that he wrote his goſpel in the decline of life—that he had ſeen the other goſpels; and added his own as a ſupplement. Others imagine, that he wrote it with an immediate intention to oppoſe ſome leading hereſies of the times: and it is probable from the great ſtreſs, which he every where lays on the divinity of Chriſt, that he had at leaſt this in his view; tho the firſt ſuppoſition of his adding a ſupplement to the other evangeliſts might have been his *general intention.*——He ſeems alſo to have taken particular pains to ſhew the unreaſonableneſs, and malice of the Jews in rejecting the goſpel.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

PREFACE, 241——John's teſtimony of Chriſt, 242——The converſion of Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathaniel, 244——Miracle of the water turned into wine, 245——Jeſus goes to Jeruſalem, where he turns the buyers, and ſellers out of the temple; and is queſtioned by the Jews, 247——his converſation with Nicodemus, 248——Farther teſtimony, which John the baptiſt bore to Jeſus, 250——Jeſus's interview with the Samaritans at Sychar, 251——he heals the nobleman's ſon at Cana, 254——heals the cripple at Betheſda; is perſecuted by the Jews; and makes his defence, 255——feeds a multitude miraculouſly, 259——ſtills a ſtorm; his diſcourſes with the Jews at Capernaum, 260——his diſcourſes with the Jews at Jeruſalem; and the oppoſition he met with from the chief prieſts, 264——The woman taken in adultery, 268——Another diſcourſe which Jeſus had with the Jews at Jeruſalem, 269——The reſtoration of a man born blind; and the diſcourſe which Jeſus had on that occaſion with the Phariſees, 273——his diſcourſe with the Jews in the portico of the temple, 278——Lazarus raiſed, 280——The chief prieſts conſpire againſt Jeſus, 282——Jeſus's feet anointed by Mary, 284——Jeſus enters Jeruſalem, 285——his interview with certain Greeks; and his diſcourſes with the people on that occaſion, 285——another diſcourſe with the people, 288——Jeſus waſhes his diſciples feet; inſtructs them in humility, and prepares them for his laſt ſufferings, 288——his laſt diſcourſe with his diſciples, which he concludes with a prayer, 290——Circumſtances that attended Jeſus's being ſeized, and carried before the high-prieſt; with Peter's denial, 299——Circumſtances of his trial before Pilate, 301——of his crucifixion, 305——of his burial, 307——and of his reſurrection, 308——his intercourſe with his diſciples after his reſurrection, 310.

St. JOHN.

CHAP. I.

THAT holy perſon, of whom this narration treats, being united to God from eternity, was one together with him. 1. 2.
It is he who created the world. It is he, who offers ſalvation 3. 4. 5.
to mankind. He is a light ſhining through darkneſs. Before 6. 7. 8.
his face God ſent his holy meſſenger, John the Baptiſt, to draw
men by his teſtimony, to follow this true light, which God in- 9.
tended for the direction of mankind.

And yet even that very world, which he created, received him 10.
not. Thoſe very creatures to whom he gave life, rejected the 11.

1. Many learned men, and eſpecially Dr. Lardner, have ſhewn, that when St. John ſpeaks of the *word*, he did it not in conformity to the Platoniſts, as many have ſuppoſed; but merely as it was a cuſtomary way of ſpeaking among the Jews. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made.* Pſ. xxxiii. 6. *Until the time came that his cauſe was known, the word of the Lord tried him.* Pſ. cv. 19.

2. St. John in the two firſt verſes, ſhews the *nature* of Chriſt——in the third his *power*; and from the fourth to the nineteenth he expatiates on the *work of redemption*.

9. Better tranſlated; *which coming into the world, inlighteneth every man.*

11. Some commentators apply this immediately to the Jews: as if they were more peculiarly his *own*. I ſhould ſuppoſe it refers equally to all, who reject him.

12. ſalvation he offered. But to thoſe who ſhall accept him, and believe his promiſes, he will give the glorious privilege of being
13. the ſons of God. They ſhall be born again, not after the manner of men; but through the influence of the Holy Spirit of God.

14. It was this divine perſon, who condeſcended to dwell with man; and we, who had nearer acceſs to him, are the witneſſes of his
15. glory, and power. In this teſtimony alſo John the Baptiſt joined; giving the fulleſt evidence of his greatneſs, and excellence.

16. Nor was the holy religion he revealed, a leſs convincing proof; from the excellence of which hath flowed every grace, that hath
17. been communicated to us. The law of Moſes was defective and partial. That of Chriſt, being full, and clear, offers ſalvation
18. to all mankind. Never before was the will of God thus revealed to fallen man.

19. John's teſtimony to this great truth, was given on this occaſion. The auſterity, and holineſs of his life, and doctrines having ſpread his fame through Judea; the council at Jeruſalem thought it proper to ſend certain prieſts, and Levites to enquire, Whether he were the Meſſiah?
20. John with great earneſtneſs declared he was not.

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14. *The word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory.* This paſſage is commonly, and I think very juſtly, produced in proof of the divinity of Chriſt. The word *dwelt* might be tranſlated *tabernacled*; ſo that here ſeems to be an alluſion to the Deity's dwelling between the Cherubims. In the ſame manner as God appeared there; the Son veiled, or *tabernacled in the human form,* appeared in the fleſh. The evangeliſt may perhaps have had *immediately* in his eye the transfiguration.

16. *Grace for grace.* Perhaps the preciſe meaning of theſe words may be, *One inſtitution of grace in the room of another*; as the law of Moſes is mentioned immediately after.

They

They then aſked, Whether he was Elijah (whom the Jews ſuppoſed would riſe again to introduce the Meſſiah) or any other of the old prophets? 21.

He aſſured them he was not.

They deſired then to know, who he was; that they might return an anſwer to thoſe who ſent them? 22.

John anſwered from the prophet Iſaiah; that he was *the voice of one crying in the wilderneſs, make ſtrait the way of the Lord.* 23.

The Phariſees (for of that ſect were theſe inquiring prieſts) deſired then to know, on what authority he baptized; as his baptiſm certainly implied the introduction of a new religion? 24. 25.

John told them, it implied nothing as from himſelf: but had reference intirely to that ſuperior perſon, who ſhould ſoon make his appearance among them; and whoſe coming he was directed by the prophets to proclaim. 26. 27.

This tranſaction paſſed at the Ferry, or paſſage-place, on the river Jordan; where was commonly a great reſort of people; and where John, at that time, had fixed his ſtation. 28.

The next day, John ſeeing Jeſus coming towards him, pointed him out to the people, as the Lamb of God, who came to fulfill all the typical ſacrifices of the law, by taking away the ſins of the world. This is he, continued John, of whoſe ſuperior excellence I ſpoke. When I began my miniſtry, I knew him not. I knew only in general, that ſuch a perſon ſhould ariſe; and that I was to prepare his way by calling men to repentance. Now I can bear the ſtrongeſt teſtimony. I ſaw the Spirit of God deſcending 29. 30. 31. 32.

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21. John could only mean, that he was not *really the perſon* of Elijah; for if he knew his own deſignation, he was certainly that perſon, who was to come *in the ſpirit and power of Elijah.* Luke i. 17.

29. See Exod. xxx. 15. Levit. i. 4.—iii. 2.—iv. 4.

33. from heaven, and reſting upon him: and that ſame revelation, through which I was ordered to preach, and baptize; gave me intimation alſo, that he, on whom I ſhould ſee that diſtinguiſhing ſign, was the Meſſiah, who ſhould baptize with the Holy Ghoſt.
34. This ſign therefore I ſaw, and bear record, that, that ſacred perſon, on whom it reſted, is the Son of God.

35. 36. It happened, the next day, that as John was ſtanding with two of his diſciples, he ſaw Jeſus at a diſtance; and pointing him out,
37. as that eminent perſon, who was to make atonement for the ſins
38. 39. 40. of the world, the two diſciples followed Jeſus; and by his per-
41. miſſion attended him.

One of them, whoſe name was Andrew, immediately went in queſt of his brother Simon; and told him with great joy, that
42. he had found the Meſſiah; and carried him to Jeſus. Jeſus, in the ſpirit of prophecy, gave him the name of *Peter*, which ſignifies a *rock*; implying that ſteady ſupport, which he ſhould hereafter give to the church of Chriſt.

43. The day after, Jeſus going into Galilee, found Philip; whom
44. he engaged to follow him. Philip lived at Bethſaida, where Andrew, and Peter alſo lived, from whom he had gained a know-
45. ledge of all that John had teſtified of Jeſus. He being deſirous alſo of communicating ſtill farther the joyful information, went to Nathaniel, and told him the happy news of his having ſeen, and

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42. This interview between Jeſus and Peter, differs ſo *very materially* from that mentioned in Matthew, that we muſt ſuppoſe it a prior one: and that after this tranſaction, which John mentions, Peter returned home; and was not called to *follow* Jeſus, till that time, which is recorded by St. Matthew.

45. Dr. Cave has uſed arguments, which have convinced many learned men, that Nathaniel was the apoſtle Bartholomew.

converſed

converſed with that great perſon, pointed out by the prophets, Jeſus of Nazareth, the promiſed Meſſiah.

Nathaniel doubting, from the mention of Nazareth, the truth of what Philip had ſaid, Philip referred him to Jeſus himſelf; to whom accordingly they both went. 46.

Jeſus ſeeing Nathaniel coming to him, ſaid, *Behold an Iſraelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.* 47.

As Nathaniel was expreſſing his ſurpriſe at this ſalutation, apprehending that Jeſus had never before heard of him; Jeſus told him farther, that before Philip called him, he had ſeen him under the fig-tree. This alluded to ſome particular circumſtance, well known to Nathaniel; on which he cried out in an ecſtaſy of conviction, that he was ſure Jeſus was the Son of God, and the expected Meſſiah. 48. 49.

Jeſus, pleaſed with his ingenuity, in diveſting himſelf of all his prejudices on the firſt evidence; told him, that his faith ſhould hereafter be confirmed by many kinds of evidence ſtill ſtronger than this. 50. 51.

CHAP. II.

The firſt occaſion, on which Jeſus ſhewed his divine power, was at a marriage in Cana, a town of Galilee, to which Jeſus, his mother, and diſciples were invited. It was the third day of the marriage; and the wine falling ſhort, Mary mentioned it to 1. 2. 3. 4.

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46. In the text, Nathaniel aſks, *Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?* By *good thing*, or *that good thing* as it might be rendered, it is probable, he might mean the Meſſiah, who is ſo called by the prophet Jeremiah (xxxiii. 14.) Nathaniel alſo no doubt knew, that the Meſſiah was to be born at Bethlehem.

51. *Hereafter you ſhall ſee heaven open, &c.* This perhaps alluding to that remarkable viſion of Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 12) ſeems to apply that communication between heaven and earth, which that patriarch ſaw, to goſpel times.

4. *Woman what have I to do with thee?* In thoſe early days, a woman of the greateſt faſhion was addreſſed in the ſtile of ω γυναι: ſo that the expreſſion implies nothing diſreſpectful: and the words *What have I to do with thee*, may be rendered, *What haſt thou to do with me?* and ſeem to imply only what I have expreſſed above.

Jeſus.

Jesus. Jesus told her, that the time of his publicly shewing himself to the world was not yet come; of which he was the
5. best judge. However he gave her such intimations of his intention, that she bad the attendants do, whatever he should order.
6. There stood in another room six large earthen vessels, each containing several gallons, for the purpose of those purifications, which
7. were common at a Jewish entertainment. These vessels were filled
8. by Jesus's order, with water; which was drawn off, and carried
9. to the governor of the feast; who was so surprised at the excel-
10. lence of the wine, into which it had been immediately changed; that yet ignorant whence it came, he mentioned it to the bride-
11. groom, as the best they had yet had. The servants soon after

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11. I cannot say I understand this miracle, as it is *commonly* understood—that is, as a supply of wine, in the manner, in which we use wine in our entertainments, by way of a regale. Wine was the common beverage of Judea: and as the Jewish wedding-feasts lasted seven days, the liquor might be now, on the third day, nearly spent: especially, as we may suppose, from the guests who were invited, that the bridegroom was probably, a man in a low station. Our Saviour therefore gave a supply, under the same idea, as he fed a hungry multitude.—— The word μεθυ,θωσι, which we render *well-drunk*, I believe, might easily be found, in good authors, without any idea of intemperate drinking. Hippocrates plainly uses it in opposition to drunkenness; ordering his patients, in some particular cases, μεθυσθηναι, πλην αλλα μη ες υπερβολην. (De ratione victus, Lib. III)——Dr. Clarke is pleased with an interpretation of Dr. Clagget's on our Saviour's words to his mother; as if he had said, "I am not unwilling "to be sought to by persons in distress: but I take this matter, in which you are so much "concerned, to be of little moment, and not worth a miracle. The time is not yet come, "tho it is very near, in which I shall confirm the truth by doing beneficent miracles indeed "for the relief of miserable persons; but here is no such occasion. Nevertheless I will not "think much to satisfy you in this expectation; and to do this office of courtesy to my kindred, "tho there be no absolute need of it."——I cannot say I am so much pleased, as Dr. Clarke is, with this interpretation of Dr. Clagget's. I do not think that our Saviour meant, in what he said to his mother, to express, that it was a *matter of little moment* and not *worth a miracle:* in which case, I presume, he would not have wrought one. Nor do I think it was consistent with his character to work a miracle *for courtesy*. His words appear to me plainly to imply a gentle reproof for interfering with the time and occasion of his working miracles; whih rested solely with himself: but the evangelist, I think could never mean that Jesus should call any occasion *trifling*, which, as he himself adds, tended to *manifest forth Jesus's glory*; *and make his disciples believe on him.*

explained

explained the affair; and the greatneſs of the miracle diſplayed the glory of God; and confirmed the faith of the diſciples.

From hence Jeſus went with his relations, and diſciples to Capernaum. But he made only a ſhort ſtay at that place, as he was deſirous to be at Jeruſalem at the feaſt of the paſſover, which was approaching. 12. 13.

There he found the courts of the temple occupied by dealers in cattle, and other commodities, under the pretence of furniſhing neceſſaries for the temple-ſacrifices; all of whom he drove out, ſaying, *Make not my Father's houſe, a houſe of merchandize.* Then his diſciples recollected the paſſage, in which it is ſaid; *The zeal of thine houſe hath eaten me up.* 14. 15. 16. 17.

Some of the Jews then aſked, What ſign he gave them to ſhew his authority to do theſe things? 18.

Jeſus knowing their hardened diſpoſition, anſwered them only by a prediction of his reſurrection: *Deſtroy this temple, ſaid he; and in three days I will raiſe it again.* 19.

What! ſaid the Jews, a building which was above forty years in erecting, will you raiſe in three days? 20.

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14. St. John mentions this fact as happening in the firſt year after our Saviour began his miniſtry; the other evangeliſts mention it in the laſt. Some writers, among whom is Dr. Lardner, are of opinion it was twice performed; and indeed from the 23d verſe of this chapter, and the 22d, 23d, 24th of the next, the opinion has conſiderable foundation. Beſides, if the account we have of St. John's reviſing the other goſpels, before he wrote his own, be true, we may ſuppoſe he gave this event its proper place.—At the ſame time, we muſt own, there is ſo little attention paid to the *exactneſs* of chronology in the ſacred writers, that there is no great difficulty in ſuppoſing, with other able interpreters, the action to have been only one. The *thing itſelf* was thought by all the evangeliſts worth recording; but it might appear of little moment, whether it happened at one paſſover, or at another.

17. See Pſ. lxix. 10.

20. Joſephus informs us that the works of the temple were continued through a ſtill longer ſpace of time.

But

21. But Jeſus ſpoke figuratively; intending his own body: and
22. his diſciples after his reſurrection, remembered his words, which ſtill the more confirmed their faith.

23. During the time of the paſſover, many people, ſeeing his miracles,
24. 25. believed on him. But he went cautiouſly among them; and put himſelf very little in their power. From his divine knowledge he was well acquainted with the uncertainty of mankind; and the little dependance that he could place upon them.

CHAP. III.

1. Among thoſe, who thought favourably of him, was a man of
2. conſequence among the Jews, a Phariſee, whoſe name was Nicodemus. Tho he had not reſolution to profeſs his faith openly in Jeſus, yet wiſhing to know ſomewhat more of that doctrine, which he had ſeen ſo miraculouſly proved, he came to Jeſus by night with a view to make a more particular inquiry; profeſſing, at the ſame time, his belief in that divine miſſion, which had been confirmed by ſuch wonderful works.

3. Jeſus told him, that his doctrine lay in a very ſhort compaſs. A man, ſaid he, muſt be born again, before he can be a member of my kingdom.

4. Nicodemus not comprehending the expreſſion, Jeſus explained
5. himſelf by ſaying, that nobody could be his diſciple, who, after profeſſing himſelf ſuch by baptiſm, did not change his life by a thorough repentance; and ſuch holineſs of diſpoſition, as ſhould
6. always be aſſiſted by the Spirit of God. As the mere natural life, he told him, depended on fleſh and blood; ſo did the religious
7. life on the influence of the Holy Spirit.—Does this, ſaid he, ſurprize you? Do you believe nothing, which you do not receive through
8. your ſenſes? The wind, which is inviſible in itſelf, is ſeen in its effects. Such alſo is the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Nicodemus

Nicodemus, ſtill not underſtanding clearly theſe ſpiritual ideas, 9.
continued to expreſs his ſurprize.

Jeſus told him, he had ſaid nothing, but what the knowledge 10.
of the law might lead him eaſily to underſtand; and that it was 11.
prejudice in himſelf, rather than the want of clearneſs in the
doctrine, which with-held him from the truth.—But, added he, if 12.
you cannot receive theſe plainer parts of my doctrine, which relate
to the things of this world; how will you be able to receive thoſe
parts of it, which are more immediately connected with the next?
truths, which mere man cannot poſſibly diſcover; and which 13.
the Son of God came from heaven to reveal?—Among theſe, in 14. 15. 16.
particular, is that great truth, which fulfills one of the types of
the law—the lifting up of the brazen ſerpent in the wilderneſs.
As the brazen ſerpent healed the bodily miſchiefs of thoſe, who
looked at it; ſo ſhall the Son of man's being lifted up, heal the
ſpiritual miſchiefs of all, who believe on him. As the one procured
temporal health; ſo the other, through the kindneſs, and love
of God, ſhall procure everlaſting happineſs. Man may turn the 17.
goodneſs of God, either to his happineſs, or miſery. It was
God's deſign not to condemn the world, but to ſave it; and he, 18.
who believes, and obeys the goſpel, ſhall, in the end, find the
reward of his obedience. On the other hand, he who rejects this
laſt great offer of ſalvation to mankind, muſt expect the conſequence: 19.
and the *ground of his condemnation* is, that ſuch a perſon, from the
wickedneſs of his life, *loves* darkneſs, rather than light. The
bad man naturally avoids the truth, which condemns him: while 20.

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10. Our Saviour might well wonder at Nicodemus's ignorance; as the *circumciſion of the heart*, Deut. x. 16—Deut. xxx. 6—the *renewal of a right ſpirit*, Pſ. li. 10—*God's law in the inward parts*, Jer. xxxi. 33—and many other paſſages, all ſeemed plainly to point out regeneration.

21. the good man ſeeks it, as the ground-work, and proof of his actions.

22. After this, Jeſus, and his diſciples, went into Judea, to preach,
23. 24. and to baptize. At the ſame time, John, who was not yet thrown into priſon, was baptizing at Enon, near Salim; where was a pool of water commodious for the purpoſe.

25. About this time a diſpute aroſe between certain Jews, and ſome of John's diſciples, about the efficacy of their maſter's baptiſm.
26. And the diſciples, hurt with the thing, carried it to John. The ground of the diſpute was, that, as Jeſus baptized more diſciples than John, his baptiſm ſeemed to be of a ſuperior nature.
27. John, with great humility told his diſciples, that every man
28. ſhould be ſatisfied with what heaven had appointed. You are my witneſſes, ſaid he, that I always ſpoke of my own inferiority to Chriſt; and conſidered myſelf only as a meſſenger ſent before
29. him. I am only the bridegroom's friend: it is my part barely
30. to rejoice in his happineſs. My conſequence is now over: his,
31. is increaſing. His commiſſion is of higher authority, than that
32. of any prophet. And ſo far am I from being hurt by his ſuperiority; that I am only grieved to ſee you, and others, turn
33. aſide from ſo divine a teacher. He who receives his doctrine,
34. 35. acknowledges the truth of God; for his doctrines prove their

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25. Bowyer conjectures, that, inſtead of μετὰ Ἰουδαίων, the true reading ſhould be μετὰ Ἰησοῦ. The ſenſe would then be, *A diſpute aroſe between the diſciples of John, and thoſe of Jeſus*; which would certainly be better.

29. *Rejoiceth becauſe of the bridegroom's voice*; alluding to the nuptial ſong, commonly ſung on theſe occaſions. *Solomon's ſong* is a moſt elegant ſpecimen of the nuptial ſong; and ſeems to be referred to Chriſt, and the church, merely becauſe the church is ſo often repreſented in ſcripture, under the idea of *a bride*.

origin;

origin; and ſhew from the abundance of God's Spirit, which reſts upon him, that he is the great redeemer of the world.

The concluſion therefore is, that he, who believeth, and obeyeth him, ſhall inherit eternal life: but he who obſtinately rejects, or impenitently diſobeys him, muſt expect the conſequences of the divine diſpleaſure. 36.

CHAP. IV.

After this, Jeſus finding, that his baptizing ſuch numbers, (tho he baptized merely by the hands of his diſciples,) began to give offence to the Phariſees, left Judea; and returned into Galilee. 1. 2. 3.
His road led through Samaria: and being near a town, called Sychar, he ſat down to reſt himſelf on Jacob's well; ſo named from a piece of ground, which that patriarch gave to his ſon Joſeph. 4. 5. 6.

As he ſat there, waiting for his diſciples, whom he had ſent into the town to buy proviſions, a Samaritan woman came to draw water. 7. 8.
Jeſus deſiring her to give him ſome of the water ſhe had drawn, ſhe ſeemed ſurprized at ſuch a requeſt from a Jew: for the Jews and Samaritans were at ſuch variance; that altho they had dealings with each other in trade; they had little intercourſe of any friendly kind. 9.

Jeſus told her, that, if ſhe knew the opportunity now in her hands; inſtead of being ſurprized at his aſking common water of her, ſhe would have aſked living water of him. 10.

The woman thinking he ſpoke of the water of ſome other well, ſeemed zealous in vindicating the honour of this, which ſhe ſaid, had deſcended to them pure from the days of Jacob. 11. 12.

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5. Sychar was the ancient Sichem.

6. *Jeſus being wearied with his journey, ſat thus on the well.* It were better tranſlated; *ſat therefore*, or *accordingly on the well*; that is, becauſe he was fatigued.

11. The woman obſerved he had *nothing to draw with.* It was a cuſtom then in the eaſt, and is ſtill obſerved, Thevenot informs us, for all travellers to provide themſelves with ſmall leathern buckets, becauſe the wells in thoſe parts were furniſhed with no apparatus for drawing water.

13. Jesus told her, that the water of that well, however pure, afforded
14. only a temporary relief: but the water, which he meant, quenched all thirst for ever.

15. The woman not yet entering into his meaning, desired him to give
16. her some of that extraordinary water. Jesus, turning to her, said,
17. Go, call your husband, and come hither. The woman answered,
18. she had no husband. In that, said Jesus, you speak the truth: but you have had five husbands. He indeed, with whom you now live, is not your husband.

19. The woman struck with this reproof, which she knew to be the
20. truth, and conceiving him to be a prophet; introduced the great national question, Whether Jerusalem, or mount Gerizim were the more respectable seat of worship?

21. Jesus told her, it was a question of little importance; as the time now approached, when men should worship God, neither in one
22. place, nor the other—that altho the Jewish worship was evidently of a superior kind to theirs; yet both should soon be abo-
23. 24. lished; and a purer worship established than either—that the pomp, and ceremonies of the law should be laid aside: and that, as the nature of God would now be better understood, his holy servants should of course be instructed in a more spiritual kind of worship.

25. The woman told him, she knew, that when the Messiah should come, he would put them in the way of all truth.

26. Jesus said unto her, I that speak unto thee, am he.

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20. The Samaritan's argument for mount Gerizim, was, it's being supposed to be the place, where Abraham, and Jacob worshipped.

24. *In spirit and in truth*, says the original. *In spirit*, in opposition to lifeless observances—*in truth*, in opposition to those typical representations, which were then fulfilled.

26. This is, I think, the only place, in the earlier part of Jesus's ministry, in which he openly confessed himself to be the Messiah. If among the Jews, he was with-held by the fear of giving offence; he was here under no such apprehension. See a note on Matt. viii. 4.

In

In the mean time the diſciples came to them, and were ſurprized 27.
to ſee their maſter in ſuch earneſt converſation with a Samaritan:
while ſhe, taking the opportunity, retired abruptly to the town; 28. 29. 30.
where ſhe told every body what had happened; and added, that a
perſon, who could tell her the moſt ſecret tranſactions of her life,
could not be leſs than the Meſſiah.

On this, numbers went out of the town to ſee Jeſus.

In the mean time the diſciples bringing their proviſion, deſired 31.
him to eat. But he told them, he had other food, which they knew 32.
not of. And as he obſerved them to be at a loſs for his meaning, 33. 34.
he added, that the work, which he was ſent to accompliſh, was
more to him than food. From the time of ſowing, ſaid he, to the 35.
time of reaping, you commonly number four months. But our
harveſt is more advanced.——Then pointing to the Samaritans, as
they were appearing at a diſtance in crouds from the city, he added,
Our harveſt, you ſee, is ripe already. Thus one ſoweth, and ano- 36. 37.
ther reapeth; but the labours of both ſhall be rewarded—the labours
of him who firſt ſcatters the ſeed; and of him, who afterwards reaps
the harveſt—the labours of Moſes and the prophets, who went 38.
before you; and the labours of you, the miniſters of the goſpel, who
ſucceed, and finiſh their work.

When the Samaritans came to Jeſus, there ſeemed to be a general 39. 40. 41.
diſpoſition among them, to believe in him. Many indeed openly 42.
profeſſed their faith; and all joined in requeſting, that he would
return with them to the city. He complied with their deſire; and
ſtayed with them two days.

During this time many converts were made; induced by the
force, and authority of his preaching; and told the woman, they

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35. *Four months, and then cometh harveſt,* was a proverbial expreſſion among the Jews, commonly uſed at ſeed time.

believed,

believed, not on her evidence; but on the evidence of Jesus himself. Such divine discourses, they said, as he made, could only come from the Messiah, the Saviour of the world.

43. 44. From Sychar, Jesus went into Galilee, avoiding Nazareth, where he knew the people were indisposed to receive his doctrine.
45. But in other parts of Galilee, he found a ready reception; for many of the people had been at Jerusalem, during the passover; and had seen the miracles, which he had wrought, at that time.

46. 47. While he was at Cana, a person of some eminence came to him from Capernaum, begging he would accompany him thither, and heal his son, who lay at the point of death.
48. Jesus asked him, whether he could not believe without seeing a miracle?
49. The parent was under such anxiety for his son, that he could think of nothing else; and again mentioned the desperate situation,
50. in which he lay. Jesus bad him go home, and he should find
51. his son recovered. He immediately went, believing what Jesus had said. But before he got home, his servants met him with
52. 53. the joyful news of his son's recovery. On finding that he had been restored at the very hour, when Jesus pronounced him healed, he himself, and all his family, became sincere converts.—
54. This is the second miracle, which Jesus wrought in Galilee, after he had left Judea.

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43. This seems to be the sense of the passage. St. Matthew says, (iv. 13.) that Jesus *left Nazareth*; which implies, that he either left it without passing through it; or that he did only pass through it.

46. Τις βασιλικος means *a royal person*; or, as is generally supposed, *some person of high rank in Herod's court*.

48. In the original it is, *Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe:* but Bowyer conjectures, that an interrogation should be placed after πιστευσητε, which makes the sense much easier, by taking off that harshness which accompanies our translation.

At

At the next paſſover, Jeſus went again to Jeruſalem. 1.

In that city near the ſheep-market, is a pool, called Betheſda, or the *place of mercy*; which name it obtained on the following occaſion. 2. 3. 4.

It had been obſerved, that the water, through ſome hidden cauſe, was ſometimes agitated; and that the firſt perſon, who ſtepped into it, after it's having been thus diſturbed, was healed of whatever diſeaſe he had. Round this pool were built galleries,

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1. From the beginning to the end of our Saviour's miniſtry, there ſeem to have been four paſſovers; the laſt only of which is mentioned by the three firſt evangeliſts. St. John takes notice of them all: chap. ii. 13. v. 1. vi. 4. xiii. 1.

4. This account of the pool of Betheſda is full of difficulty. Dr. Hamond makes the angel a meſſenger; and fills the pool with the entrails of ſacrificed beaſts, which he ſuppoſes gave it a healing quality. This very unphiloſophical ſuppoſition is ſufficiently refuted by Dr. Whitby in his annotations on the paſſage.—Others again have endeavoured to ſolve the difficulty by ſuppoſing the 4th verſe to be an interpolation: but too many MSS, and thoſe of high authority, oppoſe this ſuppoſition.—The beſt ſolution of the difficulty ſeems to be that of Bp. Pearce, who (in his vindication of the miracles of Jeſus) ſuppoſes, that the pool was only a common ſwimming bath, (as the word in the original implies); but that God Almighty had during a ſhort time, endued it with the healing quality here mentioned; as one more type, among the many other miraculous types of the Meſſiah, which had already been given to the Jews. This healing quality, however impreſſed, they aſcribed, as they did all the operations of Providence, to the miniſtration of angels; which St. John expreſſes by ſaying, *An angel came down*, &c.

Woolſton, and others, who have taken offence at this miracle, have laid great ſtreſs on the ſilence of Jewiſh writers with regard to this miraculous pool, particularly Philo and Joſephus. But Philo lived in Egypt, at too great a diſtance to examine a miracle of ſo ſhort a duration: and as to Joſephus, he evidently wrote for pagan readers; and all along lays as little ſtreſs, as he can, even on the Moſaic miracles. Much leſs ground therefore have we to ſuppoſe, he would dwell on any thing of this kind.

I ſhall conclude this note, with a few lines, which ſhew how capable the pool of Betheſda is of furniſhing beautiful poetic images.

So, erſt, an angel o'er Betheſda's ſprings,
Each morn deſcending, ſhook his dewy wings;
And as his bright, tranſlucent form he laves,
Salubrious powers inrich the troubled waves.

DARWEN.

or

or porches, in which lay numbers of diſeaſed, and infirm people, waiting for the agitation of the water.

5. 6. Jeſus coming to the place, and obſerving, among others, a man, who had been afflicted with a diſeaſe thirty-eight years, aſked him, what expectation he had of being healed?

7. Very little, anſwered the man; for I have nobody to aſſiſt me, when the water is troubled: and while I am making an attempt, another perſon, more ready, ſteps in before me.

8. Jeſus bad him, riſe, and take up his bed and walk; which
9. command the man inſtantly obeyed.

10. It happened to be the ſabbath-day, when this miracle was performed: and ſome of the Phariſees ſeeing the man carrying his bed, told him, it was not lawful for him to carry a burden on that day.

11. The man anſwered, that he who had healed him, bad him do
12. it. But on their enquiry, who the perſon was; he could not
13. inform them, as Jeſus had immediately left the place.

14. Soon afterwards Jeſus met him in the temple; and reminding him of his cure, bad him ſin no more, leſt God ſhould puniſh him in a worſe manner.

15. The man now knowing who it was, that had healed him, informed the Jews, that it was Jeſus.

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6. From the anſwer which the man gave, this ſeems to have been the meaning of Jeſus's queſtion.

9. It hath ſometimes been remarked, with wonder, that among ſo many diſeaſed people, one only was ſingled out to be healed. But in this, as well as every other caſe, it is impoſſible to judge, unleſs we knew all the circumſtances.

15. This he ſeems to have done with a good intention.

On

On this ground the Jews commenced a violent profecution againft 16.
Jefus, as a violator of the fabbath.

Jefus told them, that, in imitation of God, his heavenly Father, 17.
he confined not his works of charity to time, and place.

This only incenfed them the more, as they declared him now, 18.
both guilty of a violation of the fabbath; and of making himfelf equal with God.

Jefus told them, that, he acted in all things in union with God 19.
—and that the great works he had done, and the greater works, 20.
which he fhould do, all tended to convince them of this truth.
The power of raifing the dead, faid he, which the Father hath; 21.
the Son hath alfo: and the power of judgment the Father hath 22.
committed intirely to the Son; that he alfo fhould be the object of 23.
divine honour. So that whoever honoureth not the Son, dif-
honoureth the Father. Hence therefore he, who believeth in me, 24.
and obeyeth my doctrine, fhall be redeemed from all that fin, and guilt, in which a mortal ftate involves him; and fhall inherit ever-
lafting life. For the Son of God is now come to offer falvation to 25.
fallen man; and all, who hear, and obey his voice, fhall be faved.
For the Father, as I faid, hath committed to him both the power 26. 27.
of raifing to life; and of calling into judgment. Be affured, then, 28.
the hour cometh, when all that are in the grave fhall hear his voice,
and fhall come forth: they that have done good, unto the refur- 29.

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16. Some interpreters are of opinion, that Jefus was brought before the Sanhedrim; and that the apology for himfelf, which continues to the end of this chapter, was made before that council. This fuppofition is chiefly grounded on the 33d verfe, as it is plain (from John i 19) that the Sanhedrim is there alluded to. If we confider our bleffed Lord's apology in this light, it certainly receives additional dignity.

19. Some writers have brought this paffage to oppofe the divinity of Chrift: but the natural interpretation of it, and its connection with ver. 17, feem to ftand thus. *My father worketh on the fabbath, as well as other days, in the great defigns of his providence; and I work in like manner. Therefore the Son* (ver. 19) *can do nothing of himfelf, that is, feparately from the Father; but is, in all things, united with him.*

rection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

30. You see then with how little justice, you accuse me of the breach of a law of God, when I do nothing without his power
31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. and authority. If I alone bore testimony to myself, my testimony might be suspected; but I have the testimony of John also, for whose great character you all have the highest esteem. You remember the testimony which he bore, when you sent to consult him. I urge this merely to draw you to the truth, by the strength of such evidence, as is most suited to you: for myself, I lay little stress
37. on any human authority.——The miraculous works, that I perform, are, beyond all, a testimony, that God hath sent me. And tho here the witness is invisible; yet the testimony is evident.——
38. But your unbelief is proof against all, for you know as little of that God, who testifies; as you do of me, to whom he bears testimony.
39. You profess to search the scriptures, as the fountain of life; and
40. yet they strongly testify of me.——It is not therefore for want of sufficient evidence, that you reject the life, I offer; but through
41. the influence of your wicked affections. Every thing tends to shew
42. you, that I am not guided by any worldly views; yet you have not the love of God sufficiently in you, to listen to any instruction.——
43. But tho you receive not me, who come in God's name; you are
44. ready to receive others, who come in their own. Nor can it be otherwise, while a love of the world, and it's honours, lies at your
45. hearts.——Think not, that I mean to accuse you. But remember, there is one, in whom you trust, even Moses himself, who

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30. That this is a transition, seems plain (as Dr. Clarke observes,) both from the sense; and from it's beginning, just as the 19th verse does, which begins the argument.

44. Our Saviour's telling the Jews, of *their receiving honour one of another*, seems to have reference to the members of the Sanhedrim; who were remarkable for giving each other sounding titles.

will

will accuſe you. For if you had believed the writings of Moſes, you could not but have believed in me, of whom Moſes teſtifies. But if you believe not his teſtimony, it is impoſſible, you can pay any attention to my doctrine. 46. 47.

CHAP. VI.

After this, Jeſus paſſed over the ſea of Tiberias, and retired to a mountain with his diſciples. But his retreat could not be hid: for it was about the time of the paſſover; and many people, who had ſeen his miracles, and were going that way, heard of him, and began to croud about him. As he ſaw the people gathering in that ſolitary place, he was deſirous to give them ſome refreſhment, before he ſent them away; and aſked Philip, (tho with a view only to try him,) where he might procure food to ſupply ſo large a multitude? Philip told him, that all the money they had, could not purchaſe bread enough to ſupply every one of them with a morſel. But another of the diſciples, at the ſame time, informing him, that a lad there had five loaves, and two ſmall fiſhes; he ordered the people, who were about five thouſand, to ſit down in companies on the graſs; and taking the bread, and fiſh, he gave thanks, and diſtributed them, through the hands of his diſciples, among the people. When they were all ſatisfied, he bad his diſciples gather up the fragments, that nothing might be loſt. With theſe they filled twelve baſkets. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13.

The multitude, on ſeeing this great miracle, univerſally declared, that Jeſus was that prophet, whom they expected. And indeed their zeal, in a little time, aroſe to ſuch a degree; that Jeſus, finding they were inclined, in a tumultary manner, to place him at their head, retired from them, unobſerved, to a place of ſolitude. 14. 15.

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15. It always appears, that the multitude followed Jeſus under the idea of his being that leader, who ſhould reſtore their temporal grandeur.

16. 17. In the mean time, as evening approached, the diſciples took boat, and coaſted the lake, towards Capernaum; expecting to take up Jeſus, on ſome part of the ſhore: but he no where appeared;
18. 19. and a dark, tempeſtuous night came on. They were not however kept long in ſuſpence, before he came to them walking on the
20. lake. At firſt they were afraid: but when he ſpake to them,
21. they gladly received him into the boat; which immediately arrived at the place, they intended.

22. 23. 24. The next day, the people, who had obſerved the diſciples had gone alone; and that there was at that time, no other boat near the place; conceiving however that Jeſus was in ſome way, gone to them, got into a few boats, which had juſt arrived
25. from Tiberias, and went to Capernaum in queſt of him. When they had found him, they expreſſed their ſurprize how he got
26. there. Jeſus, inſtead of gratifying their curioſity, told them, they followed him not ſo much for the ſake of obtaining conviction from his miracles; as for the ſake of the worldly advantages,
27. which they expected from him. Be not, ſaid he, ſolicitous about theſe things; but let your attention be fixed on that ſpiritual food, which is meant to be the nouriſhment of your ſouls; and which the Son of man ſhall give you, as the Father hath impowered him to do.

28. They aſked him, What they ſhould do to obtain this ſpiritual food?

29. They muſt receive it, he told them, from him, whom God had ſent.

30. They aſked him, what extraordinary ſign he gave them of
31. being the diſpenſer of this ſpiritual food? He had fed them indeed in a miraculous manner with earthly bread; but could he

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21. See a note on Matt. xiv. 25.

give

give them bread alſo from heaven, as their fathers had eaten manna in the wilderneſs?

Jeſus told them, that the ſpiritual food, which he meant, 32.
was much ſuperior to what Moſes had given their fathers. It not only came down from heaven; but it had this peculiar advan- 33.
tage, that it was able to nouriſh them, not merely for a few years, but for ever.

The Jews however not yet underſtanding him; Jeſus told them 34. 35. 36.
plainly, that when he ſpoke of ſpiritual food from heaven, he meant himſelf, and his doctrine, which they could not reliſh, while their minds ran on temporal things. But I will kindly 37.
receive all thoſe, ſaid he, who ſhall endeavour to obtain the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit of God; and who come to me in an honeſt, and ſincere heart. All ſuch may be aſſured, on the 38.
ſame evidence, on which they believe in me, that this is the will of my Father alſo; and that he hath inſtructed me to draw 39. 40.
together all his faithful ſervants, who believe, and obey the goſpel; and to raiſe them to everlaſting life.

As Jeſus had now plainly pointed out his meaning; and ſhewn 41.
them, that by the bread, which came down from heaven, he meant himſelf; they began to take offence; and looking only 42.
at his earthly parentage, they cried, How inconſiſtently doth this man talk of coming down from heaven, when we all know from what parentage he ſprang?

Lay aſide, ſaid Jeſus, theſe undue prejudices; and endeavour 43. 44.
to be among thoſe, whom the gracious influence of the Spirit of God, ſhall draw to me, as the heirs of eternal life; and to be among thoſe, of whom the prophet ſpeaks, *They ſhall all be* 45.

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33. Ο καταβαινων, in the original, ſhould be tranſlated, *It which cometh*, not *He which cometh*.
45. See Iſa. liv. 13. Jer. xxxi. 33. 34.

taught

taught of God. This prophecy, Jeſus added, is now fulfilled. Every one therefore, who is diſpoſed to liſten to this gracious
46. inſtruction, will come to me.—Do not however ſuppoſe, that
47. you ſhall have any immediate revelations, or viſions from God. His will is revealed through me; and whoever believeth in me, and obeyeth that will, ſhall inherit eternal life.

48. In this light then I call myſelf the bread of life. The manna,
49. which your fathers eat in the wilderneſs, could only preſerve a
50. mortal life. That is the true bread of life, which qualifies every one, who eats it, for everlaſting happineſs.

51. I call myſelf this bread, not only on account of that doctrine, which purifies the ſoul, and fits it for a ſtate of happineſs—but alſo, becauſe I ſhall give my own life to procure the life of the world.

52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. This ſpeech occaſioned ſome murmuring among the Jews: and as Jeſus, who was then teaching in the ſynagogue at Capernaum, continued in the ſame figurative ſtile, to repreſent the faith of his true diſciples under the ideas of eating his fleſh, and drinking his blood; many of his followers took great offence, and declared themſelves unable to comprehend ſuch doctrines.

61. 62. What, ſaid Jeſus, if you ſhould ſee the Son of man, as you hereafter may, aſcending up into heaven, would not this be a convincing proof, that he alſo deſcended from heaven? And
63. with regard to the language I uſe, why do you conceive it in that groſs, verbal ſenſe? It is the ſpiritual application only, to
64. which you ought to attend. But, continued Jeſus, who well knew the carnal diſpoſitions of many around him, I know there are ſome, who have no faith; and without faith, it is impoſſible
65. for any one to feel the influence of God's Holy Spirit, which draws him to me.

66. Many of Jeſus's followers, taking offence at theſe doctrines, ſoon after withdrew themſelves from him.

Then

Then Jesus turning to the twelve, said, Will you also leave me? 67.

Peter with great zeal answered, Lord, to whom shall we go? 68.
Tho others may wilfully mistake your words; we are well assured, they are the words of eternal life: and tho others may 69.
waver in their faith, we are thoroughly convinced, that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Be not, said Jesus, too confident of your own good dispositions. 70.
I have indeed chosen you twelve to be my constant companions: but notwithstanding that, one of you will be my greatest adversary.
—This was a warning to Judas Iscariot, who afterwards, betrayed 71.
him.

After this Jesus continued some time longer in Galilee; not CHAP. VIII.
chusing to go into Judea, where the malice of the Jews was so
determined against him. But as the feast of tabernacles approached, 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
his brethren, (who had yet no firm belief in him) wished him to leave that obscure part of the country, where he then was; and to go with them into Judea, where he might make himself more known; and increase the number of his followers.

My situation, and yours, said Jesus, are very different. Against 6.
you the world bears no malice; but me it hates, as one in opposition 7.
to all it's views.

He then left them to go to Jerusalem, at their own time; 8. 9. 10.
and continuing a while longer in Galilee, he afterwards went privately to Jerusalem alone.

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5. It is probable his brethren, like others, had their early prejudices to conquer: but we need not suppose, they were thorough infidels; or that they did not give this advice from their hearts. It is certain they afterwards became firm believers. See Acts i. 14.

In

11. In the mean time, the rulers of the Jews were very inquiſitive
12. to find him; while the multitude ſeemed divided; ſome ſaying he
13. was a good man; others, that he was a mere ſeducer. None however cared to ſpeak openly, through a fear of giving offence to the chief prieſts.

14. It was about the midſt of the feaſt, when Jeſus went up to Jeruſalem: and as his manner was, he taught publicly in the temple.

15. It happened, that ſeveral of the Jews, who wiſhed him ill, were preſent; and were aſtoniſhed at his diſcourſes. How can a perſon, ſaid they, born, and educated, as this man hath been, attain ſuch knowledge?

16. Jeſus told them, they might well be ſurprized at this, on a ſuppoſition, that his knowledge were attained in the common way of men; but the wonder ceaſed, when they conſidered his doctrine
17. as derived immediately from God. Every one, added he, who is diſpoſed in his heart to obey my doctrine, will ſoon alſo learn to know from whence it comes. A truly good man will find my doctrines, and his own feelings, ſo entirely to agree, that this very
18. agreement will be an evidence beyond any argument. One great mark of truth, which my doctrine certainly carries with it, is this,
19. it ſeeks not the glory of it's teacher; but that of it's great author. How well qualified you are to judge of theſe doctrines; and with how much ſincerity you act, may eaſily be ſeen. That law, which you yourſelves acknowledge—the law of Moſes—you do not obſerve.

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15. It is not probable, that this knowledge related to any part of human learning; but merely to the ſcriptures.

Even

Even at this very time, you are meditating murder; and are resolved to put me to death.

At so direct a charge the Jews exclaimed, that he was certainly possessed. Which of us, they cried, is resolved to put you to death? 20.

Jesus taking for granted their malicious intentions, and the cause, which produced them; did not answer their question, but proceeded to tell them; that the cure which he had wrought on the sabbath-day, and which had so much incensed them against him, was not a transgression of the law, beyond what they themselves often practised. If the sabbath-day, said he, happen to be the eighth day from the birth of a child, you circumcise him on that day. And is it a greater breach of the law to heal an object of misery?——Lay aside therefore your prejudices; and consider things by the rules of justice, and equity. 21. 22. 23. 24.

Some of the Jews, observing the free manner, in which Jesus spoke, and knowing the designs of the chief priests, asked each other, Whether this could be the person, whom they intended to put to death? He preaches openly, said they, as if unconcerned. Others thought it probable, the chief priests might be convinced, that he was the Messiah: while many were of opinion, that as *no one could declare the generation of the Messiah*, Jesus could not, according to the prophets, answer that description, because every one knew his family and parentage. 25. 26. 27.

In answer to their objections, Jesus told them, that if it were not for the hardness of their hearts, they might easily convince themselves of his divine original; and by the greatness of his works, be fully satisfied, who sent him. 28. 29.

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21. Supposed to be the cure at Bethesda.

30. There ſeemed however to be a great diviſion among the people. Some wiſhed to lay hands on him; tho nobody attempted it, as his
31. time was not yet come. Others thought favourably of him, and ſaid, that when Chriſt ſhould come, it was impoſſible, he ſhould ſhew greater power, than Jeſus had done.

32. The Phariſees finding the attention of the people ſo much engaged by Jeſus, and his doctrine; and at the ſame time, obſerving, that a party was rather forming againſt him; took that opportunity to ſend officers privately to ſeize him.

33. Jeſus knew their intentions; and told them plainly, that in a little time he ſhould lay down his life, and return to God, who
34. 35. 36. had ſent him: but that time was not yet come; and till then, it was not in their power to interrupt his deſigns.——They however either did not, or would not, underſtand his meaning.

37. 38. 39. The laſt day of the feaſt of tabernacles was the moſt ſolemn of the whole. On that day it was cuſtomary for the people to fetch water from the pool of Siloam, which they poured out, as a drink-offering to God. This was done in remembrance of the relief, their fathers had received in the wilderneſs from the water, which Moſes ſtruck from the rock.

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34. Some interpreters ſuppoſe, the expreſſion, *where I am, thither ye cannot come*, conveys ſome menace of future judgment. But as our Saviour uſes the ſame expreſſion to his *diſciples* (xiii. 33) it cannot well have that meaning.

38. *As the ſcripture hath ſaid.* This ſeems not to allude to any particular prophecy; but to the whole tenor of the prophetic writings. If it alludes to any particular paſſage, it ſeems to be Iſa. lv. 1, which begins, *Ho! every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, &c.* This chapter was always read, during the ceremony of bringing water from the pool of Siloam; and it is probable therefore that our Saviour, who often alludes to viſible objects before him, might allude to the prieſts ſinging, or repeating this chapter.

As

As the people therefore were performing this ceremony, Jesus put them in mind, that these waters were only the types, or signs of that spiritual water, which he came to give them: and alluding to the effusion of the Spirit, after his death, and glorification; he compared it to rivers of living water, which they who believed in him, should receive, and be enabled to dispense.

The authority, and dignity, with which he spake of the 40. 41. 42.
future gifts of the Spirit, drew over numbers of people to think 43.
favourably of him. Many said, he was the expected prophet, the forerunner of the Messiah. Some said, he could not be less, than the Messiah himself: while others doubted, only from his having been born, as they supposed, in Galilee; whereas Christ, they knew, was to be born at Bethlehem, of the lineage of David.

There were some however, who were of the party of the 44.
chief priests; and wished to apprehend him. But nobody durst
attempt so bold an action. Even the officers, who had been 45.
sent for this purpose, returned without performing their errand;
and being questioned, Why they had not brought him, answered, 46.
That it was impossible to offer violence to him. Never man, said they, spake as he did.

What! said the chief priests, are you also misled? Have any 47.
of the Pharisees believed on him? You will find none but the 48.
ignorant multitude deceived. 49.

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46. This is an exclamation, says the pious Doddridge, which I hope we all make, when we read the scriptures.

49. The Pharisees had such an opinion of themselves, that they used to say, nobody could partake of the resurrection, but themselves; and such as had connected themselves to a Pharisee by good offices. *The people*, they would say, are accursed; they are the footstools of the Pharisees.

50. It happened, that Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night,
51. sat then in council with the chief priests; and ventured so far to oppose their prejudices, as to ask, Whether the law condemned any man, before he had first been heard?

52. But this only drew on him the reproof of those, who sat at council with him. What, said they, are you also the Galilean's friend? Look into the scriptures, and see whether you any where find, that the Messiah shall arise out of Galilee?

53. The council however finding they could do nothing effectual against Jesus, put an end to their deliberations.

CHAP. VIII.

1. 2. In the mean time, evening drawing on, Jesus retired to the mount of Olives; and early the next morning returned to the temple, where, as usual, he instructed the people.

3. In this employment he was soon interrupted by a body of Scribes, and Pharisees, who brought before him a woman
4. 5. taken in adultery; desiring to know, with great appearance of reverence, and respect, whether he did not think, she should be put to death, as Moses had commanded?

6. Their malicious design in this inquiry, was to make him obnoxious to the Romans, if he said, they ought to put her to death; or to the Jews, if he said, they ought not.

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52. The *sense*, I think, can only be as the words are here explained; and not as we translate them, *Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet:* for many prophets, Jonah certainly, and probably others, had arisen out of Galilee: and yet the word προφητης, without the article, rather leads to the sense, as expressed in our translation.

6. The intention here was just the same as in the tribute money. It was a national question. In one case it was, Whether the Jews, as a free people descended from Abraham, ought to pay tribute? In the other, Whether they had power to execute Moses's law by putting an adultress to death?

Jesus

Jeſus therefore, well-knowing their intention, ſeemed occupied on his own thoughts; and being in a ſitting poſture, ſtooped down, as if writing on the ground. On their urging the queſtion, 7.
he raiſed himſelf, and ſaid, Let him who is without ſin, caſt 8.
the firſt ſtone; and then returned to his former poſture.

The Scribes, and Phariſees were diſconcerted with this anſwer; 9.
and not chuſing to put the matter on ſuch an iſſue, went off, one by one.

Jeſus raiſing himſelf again, and ſeeing the woman ſtanding 10.
alone, aſked her, Where her accuſers were gone? And whether any one had condemned her? To which ſhe anſwered, No one. 11.
Neither, ſaid Jeſus, do I paſs any judicial ſentence upon you; but reprove you only for your wickedneſs, and exhort you to ſin no more†.

On another occaſion, as Jeſus was inſtructing the people in 12.
the nature of his religion; and telling them, he came into the world to diſpel ignorance, and wickedneſs; and through faith to lead mankind to eternal life; it happened, that ſome 13.
of the Phariſees were among his hearers; who thinking, from a part of his diſcourſe, that they had gained a good handle againſt him, told him, that as he had borne teſtimony of himſelf, his teſtimony could not be true.

Jeſus anſwered, that to thoſe, who were diſpoſed to hear the 14.
truth, his own teſtimony, was ſufficient: but as they were not ſo diſpoſed, they required other evidence. They judged, he ſaid, according to the prejudices of the world. But it was

† This account of the woman taken in adultery is omitted in ſeveral evangeliſteries, and in ſome MSS; probably becauſe it gave offence; as if Jeſus had encouraged adultery. It is plain however, that Jeſus refuſed only to condemn the woman in a *magiſterial capacity*. *As a ſinner* he condemned her, and bad her *ſin no more*.

not

15. 16. not his buſineſs at preſent, to paſs ſentence upon them. Yet the teſtimony which I offer, ſaid he, is not my own, but is
17. united with my Father's. The law is ſatisfied with the
18. teſtimony of two perſons. Mine is not ſingle. The mighty works, which I have performed, are my Father's evidence for me.

19. The Jews aſked, whom he meant by his Father?

Jeſus told them, their hardened hearts prevented their liſtening to the divine truths, which he unfolded. If they had known him, they would have known his Father alſo.

20. 21. Theſe things were ſpoken in the temple; but nobody durſt offer to apprehend him.

Jeſus added, Your deſigns againſt me cannot take place till the time of my ſuffering arrives. I ſhall ſpeedily leave you: but if you continue to oppoſe the truth, you will die in your ſins, without being able to follow me.

22. The Jews in deriſion, aſking, whether he would kill himſelf
23. to prevent their following him; he told them, his words had a very different meaning. He meant to expreſs to them their low, and earthly diſpoſitions, which if not amended, would
24. for ever diſqualify them for ſpiritual enjoyments. It was for

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15. 16. 17. I inſert the following explication, which I have met with, of theſe verſes, that the reader may judge for himſelf.

The word κρινω has a double ſenſe. It ſignifies both *to form an opinion of*, and to *condemn judicially*. In this place, ſuppoſe we underſtand it to mean, *forming ſuch an opinion, as a judge does, before he paſſes ſentence*; let us ſee what would be the meaning of the paſſage. Chriſt ſays, *I judge no man*. My kingdom is not of this world. I do not *now* judge you. Yet if I ſhould judge (and I have given you, in the preceding verſes, a ſlight intimation of the opinion I have formed of you) it is a very ſerious matter: for my judgment is true, as the Father, who hath ſent me, is with me, and aſſiſts me in forming a right judgment.—17. But to return to your accuſation of me. You ſay my record is not true. Now it is written in your law, &c.

this

this reaſon he told them, they ſhould die in their ſins; which they certainly ſhould do, unleſs they purified their affections by believing in him.

The Jews then deſiring him to give them a more particular 25. 26.
account of his pretenſions; he told them he had already repeatedly declared by whom he was ſent. Were it not, added he, for the hardened impenitence of your hearts, I could open many things to you; but I ſhall leave with you this one conſideration—that I received the doctrines, which I have ever taught, from the high authority, to which I have always referred.

The Jews ſtill expreſſing their diſbelief; Jeſus added, After 27.
you have put me to death, it ſhall then be more evident to 28. 29.
you, from the great circumſtances, which ſhall follow that event; that all my pretenſions from the Father, and of acting in concert with him, were true.

The dignity, and force, which accompanied theſe laſt words 30.
of Jeſus, were ſuch, that many profeſſed their belief in him. 31.
Jeſus aſſured them, that if they continued in that profeſſion, they ſhould be his diſciples indeed. You ſhall know the truth, 32.
ſaid he, and the truth ſhall make you free.

This ſpeech again excited the malice of the unbelieving part 33.
of his audience. What! ſaid they, can we receive any higher degree of freedom, than we have already received from Abraham?

Jeſus told them, that wicked people were always ſlaves, faſt 34.
bound in the fetters of ſin. The ſlave, ſaid he, is not properly 35.
a part of the houſehold; but the ſon certainly is; and he, 36.

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33. In the text it is, *they anſwered*, that is, in ſtrict grammar, they who had juſt profeſſed their belief, anſwered. But we cannot reaſonably ſuppoſe, either their faith to be ſo very inconſtant—or that ſuch a ſpeech ſhould ſhake it. But grammatical niceties are not always obſerved.—The Jews muſt have meant this freedom in a ſpiritual ſenſe; for in a temporal ſenſe the nation had been often in bondage.

whom

whom the ſon, under the authority of the father, ſhall make
37. 38. free. That you are deſcended from Abraham, I allow: but as you oppoſe me with ſuch malice, becauſe my doctrine is of too pure, and heavenly a nature for you, you plainly ſhew, whoſe children you are.

39. The Jews aſked, Whoſe children they could be, but the children of Abraham?

If you were the children of Abraham, ſaid Jeſus, you would
40. do the works of Abraham. But by your malice to me, who have told you the truth, you plainly ſhew, that altho you are deſcended from Abraham, you poſſeſs none of his ſpirit.
41. Your actions diſcover your true father.

We are no idolaters, ſaid the Jews: we worſhip one God, whoſe children we are.

42. If God, ſaid Jeſus, were your father, I, who come from God, and have teſtified myſelf as ſuch by my works, might expect your
43. love. But you allow not my authority, becauſe you cannot bear
44. my doctrine. They, who do the works of the devil, are the children of the devil. He was an enemy to all truth, becauſe he
45. had no truth in himſelf. And thus the only cauſe of your oppoſition to me, is, becauſe I tell you the truth. Either
46. believe my authority; or diſprove it. An honeſt, ſincere heart
47. is all that is wanting for the reception of God's word. You have not this; and certainly therefore are not the children of God.

48. The Jews then in great wrath, began to tax him with madneſs; ſaying, he was worſe than a Samaritan.

49. Jeſus told them, that every thing they laid to his charge,
50. was founded merely on the obedience he paid to God; whoſe glory
51. he ſought; and who would, in his own time, vindicate his word.

word. It ſhall then appear, ſaid he, that they, who obey my doctrine, ſhall never ſee death.

What! ſaid the Jews, with great eagerneſs, are you greater than 52. 53.
our father Abraham and the prophets? Yet they are all dead. Whom do you make yourſelf?

Jeſus anſwered, he made not himſelf greater, or leſs. His honour 54.
was from his Father; whom they called their God. But their 55.
hearts, and doctrines were as oppoſite to almighty goodneſs; as his were acceptable to it. Your father Abraham himſelf, ſaid he, 56.
rejoiced to ſee my day; and conſidered it as the completion of all his hopes.

What, ſaid the Jews, have you, who are not fifty years of age, 57.
ſeen Abraham?

Be aſſured, ſaid Jeſus, that before Abraham was, I AM. 58.

On this, their rage exceeding all bounds, they took up ſtones 59.
to put him to inſtant death: but as his time of ſuffering was not yet come, he miraculouſly paſſed through them, and left the temple.

CHAP. IX. 1. 2.

Soon after, as Jeſus was on the road with his diſciples, they met a man, who had been born blind. The diſciples ſuppoſing, that

58. One ſhould imagine, that Chriſt's aſſerting his divinity in the *very ſame words*, which the Almighty uſes (Exod. iii. 14) would be ſufficient to eſtabliſh that great doctrine, if we had no other proof.

2. *Who did ſin*, ſaid the diſciples to our Saviour, *this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?*

What they meant by his *parents ſinning*, is intelligible enough; but what they meant by the *man's own ſinning*, before he was born, is not ſo eaſy. It could not relate to any notion of original ſin, for that was no *particular* caſe; and ſome *particularity* in the caſe was implied in the queſtion. The moſt obvious ſolution of the difficulty, is, that the tranſmigration of ſouls was, at this time, a popular opinion among the Jews: ſo that, a ſoul, which had ſinned in one body, might afterwards be puniſhed in a more imperfect one. That this opinion prevailed among the Jews, appears from the writings of Philo. Joſephus alſo (De bell. Jud.

that misery of every kind was intended as a punishment for sin; and observing here an instance of a person's being punished, before he was able to commit sin, they were perplexed with the difficulty, and laid it before their master.

3. Jesus told them, there was no occasion to suppose that the malady before them, was meant at all as a *punishment*—that temporal evils were laid on men, for other causes—sometimes to *try them*,
4. 5. —sometimes to make them the *instruments of God's glory*. You see particularly, said he, that these maladies among men afford me many opportunities, while I continue in the world, of manifesting the power of God; and proving the truth of religion.

6. Having said this, he touched the eyes of the blind man with a
7. little clay, which he had made on the spot; and bidding him go, and wash in the pool of Siloam, he was from that moment perfectly restored.

8. 9. 10. They who had seen the man for many years, sitting blind, and begging by the road-side; and seeing him now so perfectly restored, could scarce believe him to be the same person; but calling him, questioned him on the subject.

11. The man told them, that a person, named Jesus, had healed
12. him; and related the circumstances of the cure: but he could not inform them, what was become of his benefactor.

13. Soon after, the affair coming to the Pharisees, they assembled
14. 15. in council; and sent for the man; asking the same questions, and

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lib. II. c. 12) confirms it; and the author of the book of Wisdom seems to allude to the same doctrine, when he tells us, *that being good, he came into a body undefiled*. Chap. viii. 20.——— Others, not satisfied with this solution, contend, that the Jews of those times believed they were punished, not for their own sins, but for the sins of their forefathers.

7. Blindness, occasioned by disease, had been cured; but to give sight to a *man born blind*, was considered by the Jews, as one of the characteristics of the Messiah; (see Isa. xxxv. 5) and for this reason it is probable the Pharisees were so desirous of disproving the miracle.

receiving

receiving the ſame anſwers, which the people had done before. The great offence was, that the miracle had been wrought on the ſabbath-day. Many therefore ſaid, It was impoſſible that Jeſus could 16.
be a perſon ſent from God, becauſe he had prophaned the ſabbath. Others thought it was impoſſible for a ſinner to perform ſuch a miracle. They aſked the man therefore, what he thought of the 17.
perſon, who had opened his eyes?

Certainly, ſaid he, I think him a prophet.

The Phariſees ſtill ſeeming to doubt the fact, ſent for the parents 18.
of the blind man; and enquired of them, Whether this man were 19.
their ſon? Whether he had been born blind? And in what manner he had received his ſight?

They anſwered, he was certainly their ſon; and had certainly 20.
been born blind: but by what means he had recovered his ſight 21.
they knew not. But he was of age, they ſaid: and was able to give them the beſt account himſelf.

This cautious anſwer was dictated by fear; for the Sanhedrim 22. 23.
had determined to excommunicate any perſon, who ſhould acknowledge Jeſus to be the Meſſiah.

The Jewiſh rulers then again called the blind man himſelf; 24.
and bad him attribute ſolely to God the gracious cure, he had received. As for this Jeſus, ſaid they, we know him to be a ſinner.

Whether he be a ſinner, or no, anſwered the man, I know not. 25.
One thing I know, that I was blind, and now ſee.

They then aſked him again, in what manner his eyes had been 26.
opened?

The man, vexed at their malicious, uncandid ſentiments, 27.
anſwered, that he had already told them to no purpoſe. Do you want the means, ſaid he, of being convinced? or have any of you an intention to become his diſciple?

28. On this they reviled him, calling him a diſciple of Jeſus: but
29. for themſelves, they acknowledged no maſter, but Moſes. To him they knew God had revealed his will: but as for this Jeſus, they knew not from whence he was.

30. Full of that noble ſpirit, which truth and gratitude inſpired, the man anſwered, Why, this is a wonderful thing, that you know not from whence he is, tho you ſee he hath wrought ſo great a
31. 32. miracle. Could a ſinner have ſo much favour with God? When did you ever hear before, of a perſon's opening the eyes of a man
33. born blind? If he had not been ſent by God, he could have done nothing.

34. This was more than the pride of the Phariſees could bear. What! ſaid they, ſhall ſuch a ſinful wretch as thou art, inſtruct us?

On this they immediately excommunicated him.

35. Jeſus hearing what they had done, found the man, and aſked him, Whether he believed in the Son of God?

36. Tell me, ſaid he, who he is, that I may believe in him.

37. Jeſus anſwered, I, your benefactor, am he.

38. On this the man, with great devotion, falling down before him, expreſſed his faith in the ſtrongeſt terms.

39. Jeſus, in alluſion to the caſe before him, added, that his doctrine was intended to make a great diſcrimination among men. They whoſe blindneſs proceeded from mere ignorance, ſhould be taught to ſee; while they who ſaw only through pride, and prejudice, ſhould be left in their wilful blindneſs.

40. Some of the Phariſees, who were preſent, ſuppoſing that the latter part of this ſpeech alluded to them, aſked him, If he thought them blind?

41. If, ſaid Jeſus, you are among thoſe, who are blind through ignorance, you are not thoſe of whom I ſpake. But if your blindneſs

blindneſs proceeds from prejudice, and voluntary error; you are not only blind; but your blindneſs is guilt. You profeſs to be teachers of the people: but conſider well under what authority you act; and what doctrines you teach. He that entereth not the ſheepfold by the door, may well be ſuſpected. The true ſhepherd enters by the door, and performs all the offices of a good paſtor. His ſheep, in return, know, and follow him. But a ſtranger, whoſe voice they know not, they will avoid.

CHAP. X.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

The Phariſees, not ſeeming to underſtand this alluſion, Jeſus ſpoke more plainly.

6.

I, ſaid he, am the only door, through which the ſheep-fold can be entered. All, who pretend to open the door of ſalvation, in oppoſition to me, are deceivers: tho none, who are ſincere, and deſirous to ſee the truth, can be deceived by them. Whoever therefore enters through me, ſhall find paſture, that will nouriſh him to eternal life. The impoſtor has no end, but to deſtroy for his own advantage. My end is to give life, and immortality. I am the true ſhepherd, ready to lay down my life for my flock. The hireling ſeeth the wolf coming; and without any affection for his flock, leaveth them to be deſtroyed. He leaveth them, becauſe he is a mere hireling, and careth not for them. The true ſhepherd is united to his flock. He and it are united, as the Father and the Son are united. Other ſheep alſo I have of

7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16.

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1. Our Saviour here probably alludes to the ceaſing of the Moſaic law; as ſuperſeded by the goſpel; which became now the only allowable way into the ſheep-fold. Or he may mean, that the Phariſees were falſe teachers, even of the very law they taught.—Sir Iſaac Newton, in his remarks on Daniel (p. 148) obſerves that Jeſus made theſe alluſions to the ſheep, that were kept in folds near the temple, for ſacrifices.

5. It was uſual in eaſtern countries for ſhepherds to lead their flocks out to paſture, to the ſound of the pipe. In ſome countries it is yet practiſed.

16. Moſt probably this is ſpoken of the Gentiles.

different

different folds; them alſo will I draw together, and unite with
17. theſe. It is the act of laying down my life voluntarily, and
18. taking it again, that is ſo agreeable to my Father. The malice of my enemies could have no effect againſt me, unleſs I choſe myſelf to lay down my life. By my power of taking it again, may be ſeen my power of laying it down. Yet in this I act entirely in concert with my Father.

19. Theſe diſcourſes, tho not clearly underſtood, occaſioned much
20. diviſion among the people. Some ſaid, that Jeſus was plainly
21. mad; and did not deſerve attention. Others ſaid, that the late great miracle he had wrought on the blind man, undoubtedly refuted that charge.

22. 23. It happened, about this time, that as he was walking in the portico of the temple (for it was in the winter ſeaſon near the
24. time of the Maccabean dedication) that many of the Jews, who were there, coming about him, deſired him to ſpeak in plain language, whether he were really the Meſſiah?

25. Jeſus knowing their malicious intentions, told them, if their hearts had not been hardened, he had ſaid enough already to convince them. The miracles, which he wrought, bore ſufficient teſtimony to the authority, under which he acted. But your
26. unbelief, ſaid he, ariſes not from the want of evidence; but
27. from the want of an honeſt, ſincere heart. They who are
28. well-diſpoſed, will hear, and attend to me; and by perſevering in their obedience, will reſiſt every difficulty in this world, and

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23. Solomon, as Joſephus informs us, not finding room enough on mount Sion for the completion of his deſign in building the temple, raiſed a maſſy wall from the bottom to the top of the mountain; and filling up the intermediate ſpace with earth, founded upon it a vaſt portico; part of which continued in the ſecond temple, and was known by the name of *Solomon's porch*.

inherit

inherit eternal life in the next. No violence, nor outward force of any kind, can affect them; through the influence of my Father; with whom I act in perfect union. 29. 30.

This latter ſpeech excited the indignation of the Jews ſo much, that they took up ſtones to put him to death. 31.

Jeſus reminded them of the many great works he had done; and aſked them, for which of theſe they meant to deſtroy him? 32.

The Jews told him, their indignation was excited, not for his good works; but for his blaſphemous diſcourſe; and for making himſelf equal with God, tho he was only a mere man. 33.

How perverſely, anſwered Jeſus, do you behave? Are not they, who act under the authority of God, ſtiled Gods in your law? And if you allow this; how is it, that you are ſo offended at me, for calling myſelf the Son of God; when I act ſo evidently under God's power, and authority? If I perform not works beyond the power of man to perform, I claim no credit. But if you ſee me perform ſuch works, as no human power can effect; tho you pay no credit to me on my own account; yet believe me at leaſt on the credit of my miracles. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38.

This explanation, inſtead of ſoftening their rage, excited it. But Jeſus paſſed through the croud unobſerved; and leaving Jeruſalem, retired to the parts about Jordan; where John had formerly baptized. 39. 40.

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30. *I, and my Father are one.* This text is brought among the firſt, to prove the divinity of Chriſt. If the proof depended only on the terms, perhaps it would not be ſo ſtrong: for we have the words εν εισι, where *unity of nature* is not intended. *He that planteth, and he that watereth,* εν εισι: they concur in one deſign. But certainly the words receive great force from the 33d verſe; which ſhews, that the Jews, who muſt have underſtood what our Saviour meant, conceived them as a claim to divinity.

Here

41. 42. Here many came to him in his retreat, and believed on him, ſaying, John wrought no miracles, as Jeſus doth; while all that John teſtified of Jeſus, is true.

CHAP. XI.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. In the village of Bethany lived a family, for whom Jeſus had always expreſſed much regard; conſiſting of a brother, and two ſiſters, Lazarus, Martha, and Mary; the laſt of whom was the perſon, who anointed the feet of Jeſus, and wiped them with her hair. The brother being taken ill, the two ſiſters immediately ſent to inform Jeſus; who returned an anſwer, aſſuring them that their brother's illneſs ſhould not end in death; but was intended merely, that religion, and the glory of God, ſhould be more confirmed.

6. 7. 8. After this, he continued two days, where he was; and then told his diſciples, he propoſed to return into Judea; which ſurpriſed them not a little, conſidering the late ill-treatment he had met with there.

9. 10. 11. Jeſus told them, that as men walk ſafely in the day; and fear dangers only in the night; ſo he was in no danger, till the appointed time of his ſufferings arrived. He then informed them, that their friend Lazarus was aſleep: and he went to awake

12. 13. 14. 15. him. But the diſciples not underſtanding him, he told them plainly that Lazarus was dead. And I am glad, ſaid he, that I was not with him before; as I ſhall now be enabled to confirm your faith by a great miracle.

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10. Our tranſlation renders it, *becauſe there is no light in him.* It makes much better ſenſe, to tranſlate it, *becauſe there is no light in it*—that is, in the world.

Thomas

Thomas was the only one of the diſciples, who ſeemed to doubt what his maſter had ſaid; and could not help diſcovering his doubts by ſome expreſſions of deſpondency. 16.

In the mean time Jeſus began his journey to Bethany; where he found that Lazarus had now lain four days in the grave. As Bethany was within two miles of Jeruſalem, many people from the city, (acquaintances of Martha, and Mary,) had come to conſole them in their diſtreſs. It happened therefore, that many witneſſes of this great event were aſſembled. 17. 18. 19.

Martha hearing of Jeſus's approach, went to meet him; and expreſſed a wiſh, that he had arrived ſooner. But even now, ſaid ſhe, I know, that whatever you aſk of God, ſhall be granted. 20. 21. 22.

Jeſus told her, her brother ſhould riſe again. 23.

I know, ſaid Martha, that he ſhall riſe again at the laſt day. 24.

Jeſus ſaid, Through me, is the reſurrection to eternal life. He that believeth in me, tho he were dead, yet ſhall he live; and whoſoever liveth, and believeth in me, ſhall never die. Do you believe this? 25. 26.

Martha with great confidence expreſſed her firm belief, that he was the Chriſt, the Saviour of the world. 27.

Jeſus then ordered her to call her ſiſter; who immediately left the houſe, and was followed by the Jews, who were with her; and who ſuppoſed ſhe was gone to weep over her brother's grave. She found Jeſus in the place, where Martha had left him; and falling down before him, expreſſed the ſame wiſh her ſiſter had done, that he had been preſent, before her brother's death. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32.

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16. Some commentators ſuppoſe, and among them Dr. Clark, that when Thomas ſays, *That we may die with him*, he means with *Jeſus*. The words may favour either ſenſe; but I think the ſenſe I have taken, the more probable,

33. 34. Jeſus ſeeing the diſtreſs, and affliction of the whole company, was obſerved to weep. Then turning to them, he aſked where they had laid him?

35. 36. 37. As they were going to the place, the Jews ſeeing the concern, which Jeſus expreſſed; and concluding from thence, how great his affection was to Lazarus; aſked each other, Why a perſon, who could open the eyes of the blind, could not alſo have healed the diſeaſe, of which Lazarus died?

38. 39. When they came to the grave, Jeſus looking round him with a ſigh, bad them remove the ſtone, which cloſed it's entrance.

Martha told him, that as the body had now lain four days in the grave, it was by this time turned to corruption.

40. Did I not tell you, ſaid Jeſus, that if you would only believe, you ſhould ſee the power of God?

41. 42. They removed the ſtone therefore, and Jeſus having prayed to God in the audience of the people, that they might all conſider the miracle he was about to work, as an appeal to almighty power; cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. On this he roſe

43. 44. from the tomb, bound, as he was, with grave-cloaths; inſtantly reſtored to perfect health.

45. This great miracle had it's effect on many of the Jews, who im-

46. mediately profeſſed their belief in Jeſus. But there were ſome, who went to the Phariſees, and gave them an account of what they

47. had ſeen. On this the chief prieſts, and Phariſees, immediately called a council, to conſider, what ſhould be done with Jeſus?

48. His miracles, they agreed, were undoubted; but if he were thus

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46. Here we have a moſt aſtoniſhing inſtance of that hardneſs of heart, which juſtifies our bleſſed Lord's remark: *If they hear not Moſes, and the prophets; neither will they be perſuaded, tho one roſe from the dead.*

48. This is an inſtance of true political wiſdom—*never to truſt God with any event*; but however *contrary to juſtice*, to follow the *line of human prudence.*

ſuffered

ſuffered to go on; the people would riſe in his favour; and the reſentment of the Romans would of courſe follow.

Caiphas, the high prieſt, who preſided in the council, ſaid, It was 49. 50.
eaſy to determine what to do. Whether Jeſus were innocent, or guilty; his death was certainly a matter of expediency; and it was right, that he ſhould die for the benefit of the whole people. This 51. 52.
ſpeech of the high-prieſt's was much taken notice of afterwards, as containing a kind of prophecy, that Jeſus ſhould die, though in a different ſenſe from what he meant it, for the nation of the Jews: and not for that nation only; but for all the children of God, however diſperſed over the face of the earth.

The council having determined therefore to put him to death, 53.
inquired next into the propereſt method of executing their deſigns.

Jeſus, in the mean time, to avoid their malice, retired privately 54.
to Ephraim, a town in the wilderneſs.

Soon after, the paſſover was celebrated; and many Jews, accord- 55.
ing to cuſtom, came to Jeruſalem, before the feaſt, with a view to purify themſelves properly for it, according to the law. Among 56. 57.
all theſe ſtrangers diligent ſearch was made to find Jeſus; for the chief prieſts had iſſued a ſtrict order, that whoever knew where he was, ſhould give immediate information to them.

CHAP. XII.

Jeſus however inſtead of going directly to Jeruſalem, went firſt 1. 2.
to Bethany: where being invited to ſupper, Lazarus, who had been

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55. The Jews could not enter the tabernacle, nor partake of the ſacrifices, till they had been cleanſed by the water of ſeparation, and other ceremonies.

2. This ſeems to have been Simon's ſupper, mentioned Matt. xxvi. 6. As to Martha's ſerving in another perſon's houſe, it is probable, that theſe acts of good neighbourhood were common in Jewiſh villages. The chief difficulty is, with regard to Mary. All the evangeliſts mention this fact; but St. John is the only one, who ſpecifies the perſon. If St. Luke alludes to the ſame fact, he repreſents a woman, as a ſinner, whom from other paſſages in ſcripture, we had reaſon to believe of an irreproachable character.

raiſed from the dead, was one of the company; and Martha waited
3. on them. Mary in the mean time bringing a box of very coſtly ointment, which ſpread an odour through the whole houſe, anointed the feet of Jeſus, and wiped them with her hair.

4. 5. At this Judas Iſcariot taking great offence, ſaid, It would have been much better to have ſold the ointment, and to have given
6. the produce of it to the poor.——Not that he had any regard for the poor; but he was a diſhoneſt perſon; and as he carried the purſe, and took out of it what he wanted for his own private occaſions, he wiſhed to have it as well repleniſhed, as he could.

7. Jeſus gave him a public rebuke; and commended Mary, who had piouſly anointed his body, as he ſaid, for his approaching burial.
8. You have the poor, he added, always with you: but this is an extraordinary occaſion.

9. As it was ſoon known, that Jeſus was at Bethany, numbers of people reſorted thither from Jeruſalem, both to ſee him, and alſo
10. to ſee Lazarus, whom he had raiſed from the dead. This brought Lazarus alſo into danger from the chief prieſts; who, in their conſultations, determined to put him likewiſe to death; as it
11. was evident, that, through him, many of the Jews believed on Jeſus.

12. Jeſus was now become ſo reſpected by the people, that it was no ſooner known, he was at Bethany, and intended to be at the paſſover; than crouds of people, who had come from all parts
13. to Jeruſalem, went out to meet him; carrying palm-branches in

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3. This is the action to which the evangeliſt refers chap. xi. 2.

4. Judas Iſcariot is ſuppoſed by many to be the ſon of that Simon, who entertained Jeſus.

6. This is ſuppoſed by ſome interpreters to be the meaning of the original, *he bare what was put therein*; that is, *he took out*, or *purloined* it.

their

their hands, and crying, Bleſſed is the king of Iſrael, who cometh in the name of the Lord.

In this triumphant manner, riding upon an aſs's colt, Jeſus 14.
entered Jeruſalem; fulfilling that prophecy of Zechariah, *Fear not* 15.
daughter of Sion, behold thy king cometh, ſitting on an aſs's colt. His 16.
diſciples however, at this time, recollected not the completion of the prophecy: but after his reſurrection, their faith was greatly confirmed by it. The people, in the mean while, thought of 17.
nothing, but of the great miracle, which Jeſus had performed in 18.
raiſing Lazarus from the dead; which was indeed the principal cauſe of their thronging together in ſuch multitudes. The Pha- 19.
riſees therefore durſt not at preſent, attempt to oppoſe a perſon of ſuch popularity.

There happened to be, at this time, in Jeruſalem, certain Greeks, 20.
who came, as many other foreigners did, to worſhip, during the ſolemnity of the paſſover, in the outward courts of the temple. Theſe ſtrangers having heard of the fame of Jeſus, and being ſoli- 21.
citous to ſee him, found out Philip; and deſired him to carry them to his maſter. Accordingly Philip, and his brother Andrew, 22.
acquainted Jeſus with their deſire.——Jeſus took the oppor- 23.
tunity of theſe ſtrangers inquiring after him to inform his diſciples of that great event, when the goſpel ſhould be manifeſted, not only to a few Greeks, but to all the nations of the earth. ——Yet as a grain of corn, ſaid he, dies, before it produces 24.
its increaſe; ſo muſt the Son of man die alſo, before his doctrines are propagated. In the mean time, let me forewarn you 25.

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15. Zech. ix. 9, and the note on Matt. xxi. 9.

22. It does not appear from the text, that Jeſus ſaw the Greeks; tho it is moſt probable he did. But the evangeliſt mentions them only as an introduction to what Jeſus ſaid, with regard to the future progreſs of the goſpel through the world.

to

to expect a time of trial. He who avoids the dangers, to which his religion leads him, for the sake of any worldly advantage, ne-
26. 27. glects his best interest. But if he follow my sufferings; he shall partake of my glory. Human nature, no doubt, is disturbed at suffering: I am myself inclined to say, Father, save me from this hour: but I know the end of my coming into the world, was to meet this hour.

28. Jesus then looking up to heaven, expressed, in a strong act of devotion, his intire resignation to the will of God. Glorify thy name, said he, O God, in me, as thou thinkest fit. On this an awful voice from heaven proclaimed; *I have already glorified it; and will exalt it with increasing glory.*

29. The people, who stood around, heard the voice; and some of them thought it was thunder. Others supposed, it was an angel that spake.

30. Jesus told them, that the miraculous voice they had heard, came not on his account: but as a testimony from heaven for their sakes; to convince them of the manifestation of the glory
31. of God; which was speedily to take place—when the powers
32. of darkness, said he, shall be restrained, and when I shall be
33. *lifted up*, and draw all nations unto me. In this Jesus alluded to the *manner* of his death; and to the celebrated type of the brazen serpent in the wilderness.

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27. As all the pointing of the new testament is arbitrary, great alterations of the sense may often be introduced merely from different pointings; as in the instance of this verse. We read it; *What shall I say? Father save me from this hour. &c.* But it conveys a very different and a better sense, if it be pointed thus: *What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? but, &c.*

29. Wetstein ingeniously conjectures on this passage; that the Greeks thought it thunder; but that the Jews, who understood the words, thought an angel spoke.

What

What Jesus had just said, brought on an inquiry from 34.
some of the Jews about the Messiah. The law spoke of Christ, as *abiding for ever*; and they wished to know how that was reconcilable with his being *lifted up*, or taken away?

Jesus knowing that they asked the question with no good 35. 36.
design, instead of a direct answer, gave them warning, not to neglect the present opportunity. They now, he told them, enjoyed the advantage of the light: but if they refused to walk in it, they should be left in that darkness, which they preferred.

Having said this, he left Jerusalem, and retired privately to Bethany.

Thus, notwithstanding the many miracles, which he wrought, 37.
numbers, who saw them, did not believe in him; according 38.
to the prediction of Isaiah, *Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* And
indeed it was impossible, that such people, as Isaiah describes, 39. 40. 41.
when he foresaw the glorious manifestation of Christ's kingdom, could be disposed to believe the gospel: *You hear*, says he, *but understand not; you see, but perceive not. For the heart of this people is fat, and their ears heavy, and their eyes shut, so that they see not with their eyes, nor hear with their ears, nor understand with their heart, that they may be converted, and I should heal them.*

Notwithstanding, however, many of the principal Jewish rulers 42. 43.
believed on him: but were too much blinded by the fashion of

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34. From the words here used, it is evident, that the Jews considered the expression, *Son of man*, to belong to the Messiah, in the same manner as *Son of God*.

41. See Isa. vi. 9.

the

the world, and too much afraid of giving offence, to make a public confeſſion of their faith.

44. 45. On another occaſion, as Jeſus was ſpeaking to the people in general; he told them, that a belief in God, and in him, were ſo cloſely united, that it was hardly poſſible to believe in one,
46. without believing in the other. He who believeth in me, ſaid he, ſhall find the glorious effects of being reſtored from darkneſs
47. 48. to light. But he, who doth not believe in me, tho he may live ſecure from any judgment here (for I came not at preſent to judge the world, but to ſave it) ſhall hereafter find himſelf called into judgment for rejecting that goſpel, of which he once
49. had ſo gracious an offer; and which, if he be not hardened in
50. wickedneſs, he muſt acknowledge to have come from God; through whom I ſpeak; and in whoſe name I publiſh everlaſting life.

CHAP. XIII. 1. 2. 3. Jeſus now knowing, that the time of his ſufferings approached (for Judas he knew had determined to betray him) reſolved, before he ſuffered, to give his diſciples a proof of that humility, on which he laid ſo great a ſtreſs; and likewiſe an inſtance of that
4. love for them, which he had ever ſhewn. He aroſe therefore
5. from ſupper; and turning his upper garment aſide, girt himſelf with a towel; and pouring water into a baſon, began to waſh
6. the feet of his diſciples. Coming in courſe to Peter, that diſciple
7. would not ſuffer him to perform ſo mean an office for him. But Jeſus told him, he ſhould afterwards, explain the reaſon of what

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5. Barclay in his apology, (p. 467) contends, that waſhing feet is as much an ordinance of the goſpel, as baptiſm, or the Lord's ſupper: and ſo the church of Rome ſeems nearly to conſider it. But it appears plainly to have been intended by Jeſus only as an example of humility to his diſciples, juſt as, on another occaſion, he ſet a little child before them. It has not the air of a divine ordinance—it is not mentioned in any other place; or by any other evangeliſt—nor was it conceived in that light by the early Chriſtians.

he

he did. Peter however ſtill refuſed. On this Jeſus alluding to 8.
that purity of mind, of which waſhing was an emblem, replied,
that if he waſhed him not, he ſhould have no part with him.
Peter entering into his maſter's alluſion, wiſhed, as that was the 9.
caſe, that not only his feet; but his whole body might be waſhed.
Jeſus ſtill continuing the alluſion, told him that, as a perſon 10.
throughly clean, might eaſily wipe off a little caſual dirt, which
he might receive in travelling; ſo a perſon well-grounded in
his religion, would have only the common infirmities of nature
to contend with.——But, added Jeſus, notwithſtanding you all
ought to be in this ſtate of purity; I know it is otherwiſe.
This he ſpoke, alluding to that diſciple, who, he knew, would 11.
betray him.

After Jeſus had thus waſhed his diſciples feet, he drew his gar- 12. 13. 14.
ment again around him, and ſat down. Then turning to them,
I have now given you, ſaid he, a great, and memorable inſtance
of that humility of mind, which I have always preſſed upon you,
as the leading virtue of the goſpel. If I have ſhewn ſuch humility 15.
to you; you ought certainly to ſhew it, on all occaſions, to each
other. For whatever the maſter does, cannot be thought unworthy 16.
of the diſciple. All theſe things I lay before you; and you liſten 17.
to them: but happy only is he, who makes them the rule of his
life. Yet notwithſtanding all my precepts, and example, there 18.
is one among you, who will fulfill the ſcriptures by *lifting up his heel againſt me*. I mention this to you before it happen, that after 19.
it hath happened, it may be a new confirmation of your faith.——
And be not alarmed, as if this deſertion ſhould render your preaching 20.
leſs exemplary, and convincing. I repeat to you, what I have before
ſaid, that the reception of you and your doctrine ſhall be al-

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18. See Pſ. xli. 9.

ways conſidered as the reception of me; and likewiſe of Him, that ſent me.

21. Jeſus, having ſaid this, appeared diſtreſſed, and again told his
22. diſciples, that one of them ſhould betray him. This threw them
23. 24. all into great anxiety; and Peter beckoned to a favourite diſciple, who ſat next to Jeſus, to enquire whom he meant.

25. 26. Jeſus intimated privately to that diſciple, that it was he, to whom he ſhould give a ſop, when he had dipped it in the diſh; which he gave to Judas Iſcariot.

27. Immediately after, Jeſus perceiving, that Judas was now fully determined to purſue the wicked intentions of his heart, ſaid publicly
28. to him, What thou doſt, do quickly. This was however under-
29. ſtood by no one at the table; and was interpreted in different ways; ſome ſuppoſing, that, as Judas carried the purſe, Jeſus bad him make proviſion for the approaching feaſt; others, that he ordered
30. him to give ſomething to the poor. He went out however immediately, under the cover of the night, which was then drawing on.

31. 32. As ſoon as he was gone, Jeſus ſaid, The time now approaches, when the great deſigns of God ſhall be compleated by the ſufferings, and death of the Son of man; and after that, by his glorious re-
33. ſurrection, and aſcenſion. I ſhall now, my friends, be with you only a little time longer; and, as I ſaid to the Jews, you can-
34. not follow me now. But I leave my inſtructions with you, particularly

24. The words in the text, *lying on Jeſus's breaſt*, allude only to the recumbent manner, in which the Jews, as well as other nations, diſpoſed themſelves, during a meal at table.

30. It is ſaid in the text, *he then having received the ſop, went immediately out*; as if receiving the ſop had been the cauſe. I apprehend it means only to mark the time.

34. The newneſs of the commandment conſiſted not in *loving one another*; but in the *meaſure* of that love:—you are to love one another *as* I have loved you. It is not a ſmall degree of love,

particularly that great, and new commandment; that you love each other: not after the manner of the world; but after the example which I have given you with diſintereſted love: and let 35.
this be the great diſtinguiſhing mark of your being my diſciples.

Here Peter diſtreſſed at his maſter's ſaying, his diſciples could 36.
not follow him *now*, aſked him the reaſon. Jeſus told them, that his own work was now over; theirs only juſt begun. They could not therefore follow him, till they had compleated *their* buſineſs, as he had compleated *his*.

Peter told him, he ſhould find no difficulty in following him 37.
now. I am ready, ſaid he, even to lay down my life for your ſake.

Jeſus thinking it right to check ſuch confidence, told him, that 38.
ſo far from being ready to lay down his life for his ſake, the cock ſhould not crow, till he had three times denied him.

CHAP. XIV.

Then conſoling the ſorrow, which his diſciples diſcovered on 1.
his talking of leaving them, he bad them not be diſtreſſed; but have that confidence in him, which they had in God. The 2.
manſions of happineſs, ſaid he, in the next world, which are intended to receive me, are intended alſo to receive you; and all my faithful ſervants. I lead the way, and make preparation for you. Hereafter, in God's good time, I will receive you to my- 3.
ſelf; never to part again. Thus I have plainly diſcovered to you, 4.
both the place, you are to go to; and the way you are to go.

But the diſciples, whoſe minds ſtill ran on temporal things, did not clearly underſtand him; and Thomas, in particular, ex- 5.
preſſed his doubts both as to the place, and to the way.

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love, that will fulfill this precept. Among the ancient Chriſtians, it was ſo known a badge of their profeſſion, that it was commonly ſaid by their heathen neighbours, *See how theſe Chriſtians love one another.*

6. Jesus told him, that he himself was the way. No one, said
7. he, can go to the Father; but through me. They, who know me, know the Father also. You know the Father, by being fully instructed in my doctrine.

8. If we could see the Father, said Philip, it would be a firm foundation for our faith.

9. Have I been now so long with you, said Jesus, and is not your faith yet sufficiently confirmed? If you have seen me, you have in effect, seen the Father. Believest thou not this? Believe my
10. doctrines—believe my miracles. You shall hereafter have even
11. 12. stronger proof. After I am ascended to my Father, you shall be enabled to perform even greater works, than any you have yet seen performed. Nay, whatever you shall ask of God in my name,
13. 14. that is necessary to carry on the great work intrusted to you, you shall most certainly receive——But still remember, that the keep-
15. ing of my commandments must be the only test of your love. On this depends your receiving the Holy Spirit, which I will
16. pray to God to give you; and which will not leave you, as I do; but will continue with you through life. This is a heavenly aid,
17. of which the corrupt world, not attending to spiritual things, knows nothing. You, in a degree, feel it in yourselves already; and it shall hereafter manifest itself in all its glorious operations.

18. 19. Thus, you see, I shall not leave you destitute. The world, in a little time, shall see me no more: but with you I shall always

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10. As if our Saviour had said, My words are his—my works are his. By knowing therefore what I teach, and do, you know what the Father would wish to have taught, and done. Therefore by knowing me, you know him.

12. Our Saviour perhaps alludes here to the gift of tongues; or perhaps he uses only an hyperbolical mode of speaking, so common in the sacred writers. *Greater works* may stand for *great works*.

16. Some of the Mahometan writers pretend, that this verse is a prophecy of the coming of Mahomet. The word *Mahomet* signifies *illustrious*; and the word παρακλητον, or *comforter*, they pretend has been altered by the Christians from the original word περικλυτον, *illustrious*.

18. The tender word ορφανες *orphans* is used in the original.

continue

continue to live. My life ſhall be the ſource of yours. And you 20.
ſhall then be aſſured, without any farther doubt, of that union, which ſubſiſts between you, and me; and between me, and the Father.——But all depends, as I have juſt told you, on obſerving 21.
theſe rules, and doctrines, which I have given you. This will ſhew your love to me; and your love to me will be the foundation of my Father's love to you; and of all thoſe gracious manifeſtations, which I ſhall make to you hereafter.

Judas the brother of James, interrupting Jeſus, aſked him, In 22.
what manner he meant to manifeſt himſelf to them in particular; and not to the world?

Jeſus told him, that not only they, but all who loved him, 23.
and kept his commandments, ſhould experience theſe divine communications. But as his doctrine was his Father's alſo; they, of 24.
courſe, who obeyed him not, could have no communication with the Father.—During the time I have been with you, added Jeſus, 25.
I have given you various doctrines, and precepts; many of which may have gone from you; but when I ſend the Comforter, the 26.
Holy Spirit of God, into your hearts, he will bring to your remembrance every thing, that I have ſaid to you.—And now I leave 27.
you under the full aſſurance, that the peace of God ſhall reſt upon you; which is a different kind of peace from any the world knows: it will eaſe your diſtreſſes for me, and your apprehenſions for yourſelves. Indeed, if you truly loved me, you would rejoice at my 28.
departure; not only becauſe I have promiſed to reviſit you; but becauſe I am going to an exalted ſtate with my Father. Theſe 29.
things I tell you, that hereafter when you ſee them fulfilled, your faith may be confirmed.—I have little time now to employ among 30.

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22. Judas's inquiry proceeded from a miſconception of Jeſus's meaning. Our Saviour ſpoke of his ſpiritual kingdom. Judas underſtood a temporal one.

you.

you. The powers of darkneſs are now contriving their deſigns
31. againſt me: and I am preparing to ſhew the world that laſt, great inſtance of my love; and of my ſubmiſſion to my Father's will.

From the room, where they were ſitting, they now retired to the mount of Olives. Here Jeſus taking occaſion probably from the vineyards through which he paſſed, began again his diſcourſe:

CHAP. XV.

I am the true vine, ſaid he, and my Father is the huſbandman.
1. 2. Every branch that beareth not fruit, he removeth; and every
3. 4. branch, that beareth fruit, he pruneth; that it may bear more abundantly. Among theſe fruit-bearing branches, I number you.
5. But you muſt ever remember, that all depends upon your being firmly united to me; from whence all your nouriſhment ſprings. As the branch cannot bear fruit, unleſs it adhere to the vine;
6. neither can you, unleſs you adhere to me. He who abideth not in me, is caſt out as a withered branch, fit only for the fire.
7. Through this union with me, your prayers to God, become ef-
8. fectual; and by your obedience, in conſequence of this union, his
9. name is glorified. My love to you is like the Father's to me.
10. Continue in it, and ſhew it by keeping my commandments, as I keep his.

11. Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that the joys, and comforts of religion may reſt upon you; and that they may increaſe more and
12. 13. more; as you ſtill improve in heavenly affections. Be ever careful therefore to improve in yourſelves thoſe kind affections, of which I have given you an example, by laying down my life for mankind.

14. While you thus continue to obey my precepts, you become my
15. friends. I call you not ſervants, but friends; communicating to you
16. every ſpiritual gift, which I have received from my Father. I have received nothing from you; but have choſen you to preach my religion in the world. In the proſecution of this work, whatever you

you ſhall aſk of God in my name, you ſhall receive. And finally be
aſſured, that every thing I have ſaid to you, points to this great 17.
leſſon, that you love one another.

Nor be ſuprized, if the world return your love with hatred. 18.
You ſee how it hath hated me. This only ſhews how oppoſite 19.
it's opinions are to thoſe you have received from me. I have always 20.
told you, that the ſervant muſt not expect a better lot than his
lord. They who perſecute me, will perſecute you: and they who
liſten to me, will liſten alſo to you. It is on my account they 21.
perſecute you; and their ignorance of God is the cauſe of their
perſecuting me. Had I not come to teach them; their ignorance
had been excuſable: but now they have no excuſe. Their oppoſi- 23.
tion, it is plain, proceeds from malice, and inveterate hatred. The 24.
miracles, which I have performed among them, could not have
been rejected, if their affections had been right: ſo that their 25.
ignorance is turned into guilt. It is evident therefore, that in me
is fulfilled, what the prophet ſays, *They hated me without a cauſe.* 26.
Notwithſtanding however all this oppoſition, the Spirit of truth,
which I ſhall ſend among you, after my departure, will raiſe up
ſteady profeſſors of the goſpel; among whom, you alſo, who have 27.
been with me from the beginning, ſhall be the principal witneſſes, CHAP. XVI.
and leaders.

All theſe ſufferings which you muſt needs undergo from irreligious 1. 2. 3.
men, I mention now to you, that you may not be ſurprized when
they happen: and that a completion of what I tell you of my

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18. Εμε πρωτον υμων μεμισηκεν might perhaps be better rendered, *It hated me your chief, or Lord.* Πρωτος is ſo tranſlated in 1 Tim. i. 15.

24. *They had not had ſin*; that is, they had not had that great ſin, of which I accuſe them — that of rejecting me, and flying in the face of God.

25. Pſ. xxxv. 19.

2. *Whoſoever killeth you, will think, that he doth God ſervice.* See an effect of this religious zeal, Acts xxiii. 14. &c.

ſufferings

4. *ſufferings*, may be a foundation for your faith in my *promiſes*. At
firſt I did not mention theſe things to you, as you were then un-
5. 6. 7. prepared to receive them. And even now, you do not conſider the
bleſſed manſions, to which I am going; nor the Comforter, whom
I cannot ſend to you, unleſs I go: but you conſider only the
8. melancholy part; and are diſtreſſed merely becauſe I am about to
leave you; tho it is abſolutely neceſſary, that the Comforter ſhould
come, not only on your account; but for the ſake of the world.—
9. Of theſe great points he muſt make mankind ſenſible—of ſin, which
10. is the cauſe of their rejecting me—of that juſtification, which they
can only have through my death, and of which my reſurrection is
11. a proof—and of a laſt judgment, in which a final ſentence ſhall
be paſſed upon all men.

12. I have ſtill many things to ſay to you; which you are yet unable
13. to bear. But when the Spirit of truth is come, he will communicate
14. to you the whole truth. He will continue my deſigns by ſtill
15. communicating to you more, and more of my intentions. Both his
inſtructions and mine come immediately from God; and are therefore
16. intirely the ſame.—Jeſus concluded with reminding his diſciples,
once more, of the ſhortneſs of the time he ſhould be with them,
and of his ſpeedy return.

17. 18. But ſtill, notwithſtanding all the explanations, which he had
given them of his death, and reſurrection, they did not compre-
hend his meaning; but queſtioned each other privately about it.

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4. See Matt. ix. 17.

9. 10. 11. Theſe are difficult paſſages; and I dare hardly ſuppoſe, I have hit the true meaning of them.—*The prince of this world* ſeems to be an expreſſion merely denoting the power of ſin, which ſhall then receive it's final doom.

12. See again Matt. ix. 17.

16. Jeſus might, in theſe expreſſions, have had an eye both to his being ſeen after his reſurrection; and likewiſe to a future judgment.

Jeſus

Jesus knowing their anxiety, told them, that as to the first of 19. 20. 21.
these events, it would certainly occasion grief to *them*; as well as 22.
triumph to their *enemies:* but their sorrow, like that of a woman
in travel, should be turned into joy—a joy of a more lasting nature,
than their sorrow had been—such a joy, as should never be taken
from them. After that time, said Jesus, I shall no longer instruct 23.
you in person. Instead of applying to me, you shall apply directly
to the Father, in my name; which you have never yet done; and 24.
your petitions will be answered. All obscure intimations will be 25.
unnecessary; and the truth shall be set plainly before you. Nor
is it needful for me to pray for you. The Father himself loveth 26.
you. Your faith, and love, have given you favour before him. 27.
You may assure yourselves therefore (to sum up what I have been 28.
saying) that as I came from the Father, when I came into the
world; so I shall go again to the Father, when I leave it.

The disciples replied, they now perfectly understood him—they 29. 30.
were now convinced he knew all things; and were fully established
in their belief.

Do you now believe? said Jesus: but be not so confident of your 31. 32.
own strength. Within a very little while, you shall all be terrified,
and scattered from me. Not that I want any human assistance:
but I should wish to caution you against presumption.

Thus, I have given you sufficient ground of comfort. In this 33.
world you must expect your trials; but follow my steps: I have
overcome the world. My example will lead you to peace, and
happiness.

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30. The circumstance, perhaps, which struck the disciples, was, that Jesus should know, without being told (see verse 19) what they wanted to ask him: their case was like that of Nathaniel, chap. i. 49.

CHAP. XVII.

1. Jesus having finished his discourse to his disciples, lifted up his eyes to heaven, and broke into this fervent prayer.

O holy Father, the important hour is come. Let it now be
2. 3. 4. seen, that thou, and I have glorified each other. That great work of establishing salvation through faith in Thee, and me, I have
5. finished. And now receive me into that eternal glory, which I
6. 7. 8. enjoyed with Thee before the foundation of the world. To all, who were disposed to receive the truth, I have discovered it. I have set before them thy will: I have discovered to them that doctrine of salvation, which I have received from Thee; and they
9. 10. have believed it.——For these I put up my first petitions—these,
11. who are consecrated as thine, and mine. As I am now about to leave them, O holy Father, preserve them in that faith, and truth, which they have received; that they may continue united with
12. us. While I was with them on earth, I preserved them; and have
13. 14. lost none; but the son of perdition. And now I come to Thee, I leave comfort with them, in the midst of those trials, which they
15. shall meet with for the sake of the truth. I pray not, Almighty Father, that thou wouldst remove them out of the world; but that thou wouldst preserve them safe through the trials of it. They,
16. as I, belong not to it. Sanctify them, O God, through the truth
17. of thy holy word. As thou hast sent me into the world; so I
18. send them; and prepare them through my doctrine, and sufferings,
19. to propagate the truth.

Neither do I pray for them alone, but for all, whom they shall
20. 21. bring to the knowledge of thy holy gospel: that we may all be

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9. The expression in the original, *I pray for them, I pray not for the world*, seems, I think, to be generally misunderstood. Our Saviour did not mean, I should suppose, to exclude *the world* from his prayers; but only to pray *first* for his chosen few. He afterwards (ver. 20.) prays for the *rest of the world*. See a similar expression John x. 16.

united

united in love, and draw the unbelieving world to thy truth, that
I may finally communicate to all my followers, that eternal glory, 22. 23.
which thou haſt given to me—that we may all be united together;
and Thy love may reſt on them, as it does on me. Thus finally, 24.
O heavenly Father, grant, that all, whom Thou haſt given me,
may ever be with me; and partake of that glory, which I enjoyed
before the foundation of the world. And tho the world hath 25. 26.
not known Thee; yet I, who have known Thee, have made Thee
manifeſt unto my faithful ſervants; that the love, which Thou
haſt ſhewn to me, may reſt on them.

CHAP. XVIII.

Jeſus having finiſhed his prayer, paſſed with his diſciples over 1.
the brook Cedron, and retired to a part of the mount of Olives
called Gethſemane.

Gethſemane was well known to the diſciples, as a place, where 2.
Jeſus frequently reſorted. Here therefore Judas, who had now 3.
ſettled his wicked deſigns with the chief prieſts, led a band of
officers, and ſoldiers to ſeize Jeſus. It was night, when the armed
men with lanterns, and torches, entered the place.

Jeſus, knowing that his time of ſuffering was now come, did 4. 5.
not avoid his enemies, as he had ſometimes done; but went up
to them; and inquired whom they ſought? Upon their anſwering,
that they ſought Jeſus of Nazareth, he told them, He was the
perſon.

The dignity, with which he ſpoke, had ſuch an effect upon 6.
them, that they retired back, undetermined what to do.

Jeſus repeating the queſtion, and receiving the ſame anſwer, 7. 8. 9.
told them, that if he was the only perſon they ſought, his followers

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1. The brook Cedron took it's name from a dark gloomy valley (which *Cedron* ſignifies) through which it ran.

9. See chap. xvii. 12.

might have liberty to eſcape: Thus fulfilling what he had juſt ſaid, *Of thoſe that thou gaveſt me, have I loſt none.*

10. The diſciples, in the mean time, ſeeing violence intended, began to prepare reſiſtance: and Peter particularly drawing a ſword, wounded a ſervant of the chief prieſt's, whoſe name was Malchas.

11. But Jeſus checked this violence, ſaying, The cup which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink it?

12. The ſoldiers therefore, having recovered themſelves, ſeized him,
13. and binding him, led him firſt to Annas, the father-in-law of
14. Caiphas the high-prieſt, who had made that ſpeech with regard
15. 16. 17. to the *expediency of one man's dying for the people.* To him Annas
18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. immediately ſent him.
24.

During this time, all the diſciples, except Peter, and one more, had diſperſed themſelves. Theſe two followed the croud; and the latter of them being known to the high-prieſt, entered the palace; and ſoon after obtained permiſſion for Peter to enter.

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12. St. John is the only evangeliſt, who calls one of the officers, who commanded on this occaſion, ὁ χιλιαρχος, which was the title of a Roman officer. St. Luke ſpeaks of the στρατηγοι τȣ ιερȣ, or *captains of the temple*, who were thoſe prieſts, who ſuperintended the watches, which were ſet round it. But it is plain from St. John, that Roman ſoldiers were in the company; and it is probable, that the whole detachment, was under the command of a Roman officer, from the caſtle of Antonia.

15. It is generally ſuppoſed, that this *other diſciple* was John: but it ſeems very unlikely, that he, who was a Galilean, and an obſcure fiſherman, could be on ſo familiar a footing with the high-prieſt. It is rather probable, that the perſon, who introduced Peter, was not one of the twelve; but ſome diſciple of a higher rank; who had joined Jeſus's company.

21. Bp. Lowth, in his commentary on Iſaiah liii. 8, mentions, from the Miſhna, a cuſtom among the Jews, of proclaiming a criminal's offence before he ſuffered; that if any body could bear witneſs to his innocence, he might be allowed to do it. The Biſhop ſuppoſes, that our Saviour alludes here to this privilege, which was denied him.

22. Our bleſſed Saviour's being ſtruck in this way, in a court of juſtice, ſhews, either that there was great indecorum among the Jews, in the adminiſtration of juſtice; or great partiality, and malice, if this behaviour was particular to our Saviour's caſe.

As

As the door opened, a ſervant-maid looking ſteadily at Peter, ſaid, he was certainly one of Jeſus's diſciples. But Peter firmly denying it, mixed immediately with the ſervants, who were warming themſelves at the fire.

In the mean time, Jeſus ſtood before the high-prieſt; who queſtioned him cloſely with regard to his diſciples, and his doctrines.

Jeſus told him, his doctrines were not taught in ſecret; but propagated openly in the ſynagogues, and in the temple. He might call witneſſes on that head from every part.

As he ſpake this, one of the officers, who ſtood by, ſtruck him on the face for anſwering the high-prieſt with ſuch irreverence.

If I have ſpoken any thing improper, ſaid Jeſus, bear witneſs of it. If not, for what reaſon am I ſtruck?

While the high-prieſt was thus queſtioning Jeſus, Peter continued with the ſervants at the fire, one of whom obſerving him, ſaid, he was ſurely one of Jeſus's diſciples, which Peter again denied. 25.

Soon after, another perſon, a relation of him, whom Peter had wounded, ſaid, You were certainly in the garden with Jeſus, when he was taken. But Peter ſtrenuouſly denied his having been there.——Soon after the cock crew. 26. 27.

As the Jewiſh Sanhedrim had not the power of life, and death, their preſent buſineſs was only to procure matter of accuſation againſt 28.

28. Our Saviour had eaten the paſſover the night before, which ſeems to have been the preciſe time appointed in Ex. xii. 6, 8. But the great numbers who came to Jeruſalem at the paſſover

againſt Jeſus. Very early in the morning therefore he was carried from the palace of Caiphas, before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor. But as it was the day before the paſſover, the chief prieſts did not enter the judgment-hall, leſt they ſhould be defiled.

29. Pilate therefore went out to them, and aſked them, What accuſation they brought againſt Jeſus?

30. 31. From their anſwer, he plainly perceived, they had nothing criminal to alledge againſt him; and ſuppoſing he had been guilty only of ſome trivial tranſgreſſion of their law, bad them try him themſelves.

But they aſſured him, it was a criminal matter; and they had therefore no right to try him.

32. Thus by throwing the trial into the hands of the Romans, whoſe cuſtom it was to crucify malefactors; the Jews unknowingly fulfilled thoſe prophecies, which Jeſus himſelf had delivered, with regard to the manner of his death.

33. Pilate therefore, who had now been informed of Jeſus's claims to regal power, called him again before him; and aſked him, what he had to ſay in anſwer to that accuſation?

34. Jeſus told him, it was a charge, raiſed on a falſe interpretation of his words.

35. Pilate ſaid, that he himſelf underſtood not the nice diſtinctions of their words; but that they, who ſhould beſt underſtand them,

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paſſover, made it neceſſary to allow more time; and it was uſual for the Jews, when the country became populous, to continue the paſſover from thurſday evening, till friday evening; ſee a note on Matt. xxvi. 20. The number of Jews on theſe feſtivals, at Jeruſalem, was ſo great, that when Ceſtius made a public inquiry, he found that the lambs killed at one paſſover, amounted to two million, fifty-ſix thouſand, five hundred. Bel. Jud. VI.

32. See chap. iii. 14, and chap. xii. 32.

the

the rulers of his nation, had accuſed him. What is the interpretation, continued he to Jeſus, which you give?

Jeſus told him, that his kingdom was of a ſpiritual nature— 36.
very different from the kingdoms of this world. If I had pretended, ſaid he, to any earthly kingdom, I ſhould have raiſed an army, like other princes of the world, to have oppoſed my enemies.

You are then a king, ſaid Pilate?

In one ſenſe, anſwered Jeſus, I am: and to the truth of this 37.
ſpiritual kingdom, which God is now eſtabliſhing in the world, I come to bear witneſs; of which all who are diſpoſed to liſten to the truth will be members.

Pilate careleſsly aſking him, What he meant by truth? went out 38.
to the chief prieſts; and told them, he found nothing criminal in the perſon, they had brought before him.—But you have a 39.
cuſtom, ſaid he, that I ſhould releaſe to you a priſoner at the paſſover, ſhall I therefore releaſe the king of the Jews?

To this all cried out in ſtrong terms of oppoſition; requeſting, 40.
that he would rather releaſe one Barabbas—a very notorious offender; who was, at that time, in priſon for ſedition, and murder.

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37. Συ λεγεις· οτι βασιλευς ειμαι εγω: The text thus pointed, the tranſlation would run, *Thou ſayeſt true: for I am a king.*

38. We have a good comment on this verſe in the following lines.

—What is truth? 'Twas Pilate's queſtion put
To Truth itſelf, that deigned him no reply:
And wherefore? Will not God impart his light
To them that aſk it?—Freely: 'tis his joy,
His glory, and his nature to impart:
But to the proud, uncandid, inſincere,
Or negligent inquirer; not a ſpark.

Cowper's Taſk.

Pilate

1. Pilate however hoping to pacify the Jewiſh prieſts by a gentler
2. puniſhment, ordered Jeſus to be ſcourged; and the ſoldiers, into whoſe hands he was given, added deriſion, and ill uſage to the puniſhment. They put a crown of thorns on his head, and dreſſing
3. him in a purple robe, fell down before him, ſaluting him as a king.
4. 5. Then in contempt, they ſmote him on the face. Pilate entering into the ridicule, and hoping, that it might have it's effect on the chief prieſts, brought out Jeſus to them in that ridiculous dreſs; and told them he had given him all the puniſhment, which he
6. thought he deſerved. But the chief prieſts and officers clamoured loud to have him crucified.

Pilate told them, he muſt leave it then to them; for he found no fault in him.

7. By their law, the Jews anſwered, he certainly deſerved death, for he pretended to be the Son of God.

8. 9. This rather alarming Pilate, he carried him again into the judgment-hall; and queſtioned him much of his origin: but received no anſwer.

10. Pilate ſurprized at this, aſked Jeſus, Why he treated him with ſuch neglect? Do you not know, ſaid he, that I have the power of life and death over you?

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1. This account ſeems to differ from that of the other evangeliſts, who mention theſe circumſtances *after* his condemnation. And yet, that Pilate uſed this chaſtiſement by way of ſatisfying the Jews, ſeems probable from Luke xxiii. 16.

3. See the notes, in Matt. xxvii, on the crown of thorns, and behaviour of the Roman ſoldiers.

7. The Jews held this language, becauſe Judea, tho a Roman province, was governed, under the Romans, by it's own laws.

8. Some ſuppoſe, that Pilate was the *more afraid*, leſt Jeſus might be ſome demi-god. Others think, that as the Jews were ſo very tenacious of their religious rites, Pilate was afraid, if he did not condemn Jeſus, it might occaſion a ſedition.

You

You could have no power at all over me, ſaid Jeſus, unleſs God for his own wiſe purpoſes had allowed it: but their ſin, who delivered me into your hands, is greater than yours. 11.

This ſpeech determined Pilate to releaſe Jeſus. But the Jewiſh prieſts cried out with vehemence, If you releaſe this perſon, you cannot be well-inclined to Cæſar. Whoever declares himſelf a king, oppoſes Cæſar. 12.

This was touching Pilate in a tender part; for Tiberius, the Roman emperor, was, of all princes, the moſt jealous in his temper; and the moſt apprehenſive of a rival. Pilate therefore alarmed at this, ſat down in a portico, which was called in Hebrew Gabbatha, from it's being a *raiſed pavement*, and ordering Jeſus again before him, he endeavoured to turn the idea, which had been ſuggeſted to him, into deriſion, by preſenting Jeſus to the people, under the name of *their king*. On this the chief prieſts, with great vehemence cried out, Away with him; away with him: crucify him. 13. 14. 15. 16.

What! ſaid Pilate, ſhall I crucify your king?

The chief prieſts replied, We have no king but Cæſar.

Pilate at length gave way to the tumult, and delivered Jeſus into their hands.

It was about ſix o'clock in the morning when they led him to execution; making him bear his croſs. 17.

At a place called Golgotha, they crucified him; and to increaſe the ignominy, they crucified a malefactor on each ſide of him. 18.

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14. The difficulty with regard to the mode of reckoning time, between John and the other evangeliſts, is commonly reconciled by ſuppoſing that they followed the Jewiſh mode; and John, who wrote after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, followed the Roman.—This however does not ſet to rights all the little difficulties, with regard to time; which occur among the ſeveral evangeliſts.

19. 20. Upon the croſs Pilate had placed an inſcription in three languages, Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE
21. KING OF THE JEWS. But it gave offence to the chief prieſts, and they deſired Pilate to write only, *who pretended to be*
22. *king of the Jews.* But Pilate refuſed to make any alteration.

23. 24. In the mean time, the ſoldiers divided his garments among them; but his inner coat, being without a ſeam, they would not rend it; but caſt lots for it; thus remarkably fulfilling that prophecy in the pſalms, *They parted my garments among them; and for my veſture they caſt lots.*

25. 26. 27. During this melancholy ſcene, the mother of Jeſus, with ſome other women, who had attended him, ſtood by his croſs. Jeſus ſeeing John near them, recommended his mother to his particular care. He took her home therefore, and kept her with him, while ſhe lived.

28. Jeſus knowing, that every thing relating to his life and death, was now fulfilled, to accompliſh the laſt prophecy which mentioned *their giving him vinegar to drink,* complained of thirſt. On this
29. one of the ſoldiers dipped a ſponge in vinegar, mixed with hyſſop,
30. and putting it at the end of a reed, reached it to his mouth. Jeſus taſting it, ſaid, It is finiſhed; and bowing his head, expired.

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24. Pſ. xxii. 28.

29. The text ſays, *put it upon hyſſop*; and commentators explain it, by ſaying hyſſop grows, in the eaſt, with a long ſtem, like a reed. But vinegar, and hyſſop, (which was in frequent uſe among the Jews, ſee Ex. xii. 22. Levit. xiv. 4. Num. xix. 16) made together a medicated draught, often given to criminals. In this paſſage, it appears, as if a bunch of hyſſop was laid upon a piece of ſponge, and dipped in vinegar. The reed is not mentioned, but ſuppoſed. In Pliny's natural hiſtory (XXIII. 1.) we have the vinegar, the ſponge, and the bunch of hyſſop brought together, tho on a different occaſion.—Calidum acetum, in ſpongia appoſitum, adjecto hyſſopi faſciculo, medetur ſedis vitiis.——See alſo lib. XIV. 16.

In

In the mean time, the Jews, not knowing, that Jeſus was dead, 31.
and wiſhing the bodies to be removed before the ſabbath, (which being in the paſſover week, was a ſabbath of more than ordinary ſolemnity) begged Pilate to order the legs of the criminals to be broken; that if there ſhould be any remains of life in them, on their being taken down ſooner than uſual, they might not be able to eſcape. The ſoldiers accordingly broke the legs of the two 32.
criminals, who were executed with Jeſus; but finding, that Jeſus 33.
himſelf was certainly dead, they thought it unneceſſary to break his legs: one of them however, thruſt a ſpear into his ſide; from 34.
which iſſued blood, and water.

All theſe circumſtances the writer of this account himſelf ſaw; 35.
and bears teſtimony to the truth of them. On the two laſt he 36.
lays a particular ſtreſs; the former compleating that prophetic type of the paſchal lamb; *of which a bone was not to be broken:* and 37.
the latter fulfilling a prophecy of Zachariah; *they ſhall look on him, whom they have pierced.*

At Arimathea lived a perſon of ſome conſequence, whoſe name 38.
was Joſeph. He was a diſciple of Jeſus; but through fear of the Jews, had kept his opinions to himſelf. At his maſter's death however he aſſumed new courage; and gave a noble inſtance of his faith. In the midſt of all that ignominy, and general diſappointment, which overwhelmed the cauſe of Jeſus, during the ſhort period between his death, and reſurrection, this man, preſerving his faith intire, went boldly to Pilate, and begged leave to take

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34. Anatomiſts obſerve, that from the appearance both of blood, and water, it was plain the heart was pierced; and of courſe, that Jeſus was dead.

36. Ex. xii. 46.

37. Zech. xii. 10.

the body from the croſs, that it might not be diſgraced by being
39. caſt out among common malefactors. In this pious office he was
aſſiſted by Nicodemus, another ſecret diſciple; who brought with
him a large quantity of ſpices, ſuch as were uſed commonly in
40. embalming. Theſe two took the body from the croſs; and as it
41. 42. was late in the evening before the ſabbath, and they were preſſed
for time; they wrapped it up only in linen with the ſpices, in-
tending afterwards to embalm it properly. Having done this, they
laid it in a new ſepulchre, in a garden, near the place of execution;
where it lay during the ſabbath.

CHAP. XX.

On the morning after, very early, Mary Magdalen, who had ſeen
where the body had been depoſited, went to the ſepulchre, and
1. 2. found the ſtone removed, which had been fitted to it's mouth. At
3. this ſhe was greatly diſturbed; and ran to tell Peter, and John,
what ſhe had ſeen; who immediately haſtened to the ſepulchre.
4. 5. John arriving firſt, looked in, and ſaw the linen cloaths lying in
6. order. Peter coming afterwards, entered the ſepulchre, and ſaw
7. the cloaths lying, as John had deſcribed them; and the napkin
8. folded by itſelf, which had been bound round the head. John
alſo then went in, and comparing all things together, began to be
9. convinced, that Jeſus was riſen: for of that *full conviction*, which
10. he might have had from the prophets, he had yet no idea.—With

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39. *About an hundred pounds weight*, ſays the text. This was indeed a very large quantity. But the Jews eſtimated their reſpect, by the quantity of ſpices uſed in embalming the body of the deceaſed. Wetſtein quotes a paſſage from the Talmud, in which it is ſaid, that eighty pounds of ſpices were uſed at the funeral of Gamaliel.—Bowyer ſubſtitutes a reading, which makes the ſenſe thus; *a mixture of myrrh and aloes, of about a pound each.*—But the Jews uſed ſometimes, not only to anoint the body, but to lay it in a bed of ſpices: ſee 2 Chron. xvi. 14, where the funeral of Aſa is deſcribed.

1. The Jewiſh ſabbath was ſaturday. *The morning after*, therefore anſwers to our ſunday; which from the great event of Chriſt's reſurrection became the Chriſtian ſabbath.

this imperfect information, the two disciples returned to their brethren.

After they were gone, Mary, who still continued in great 11.
affliction about the place, went again to the sepulchre; and looking 12.
in, saw two angels sitting, one at the head, the other at the feet,
where the body had lain. On their inquiry into the cause of her 13.
distress, she told them her great disappointment at not finding the 14.
body. Then turning from the sepulchre, she saw Jesus himself
standing before her; but did not know him. Jesus asked her the 15.
cause of her sorrow? She supposing him to be the gardener, desired
only to know where he had laid the body, if he had taken it away;
and she would remove it.

Jesus looking steadily at her, said Mary! 16.

On this she instantly knew him, and falling down at his feet, cried out, in a transport of joy, My Master, and my Lord!

Jesus said, do not now delay me, you shall have other opportu- 17.
nities of seeing me before my ascension. But go now to my brethren; and tell them, that I am risen from the dead; and shall speedily ascend to that gracious God, who will be their Father, as well as mine.

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11. There is much difficulty in reconciling St. John's account of Mary, with the accounts of the other evangelists. They all agree, that Mary saw the angels: but they differ as to the point of time. Nor do I see, how this matter can be reconciled with any appearance of probability. We are constrained therefore, I think, in this passage, as in many others, to allow the variations of the evangelists in trifling matters; and consider them only as attentive to the *grand points* they had in view. See a note on Matt. xxviii. 1.

17. *Go to my brethren, &c.* There is something inexpressibly tender in this speech. Notwithstanding their late shameful desertion of him, he, (who knew *the spirit was willing, tho the flesh was weak*) sends to them in the kindest manner, and never touches more on their fault. Just so the prodigal son was received. Luke xx.

On

18. 19. On the evening of that very day, (the firſt day of the week,) on which Mary had told theſe things to the diſciples, as they were aſſembled privately for fear of the Jews, Jeſus ſtood in the
20. midſt of them, and having bleſſed them, ſhewed them his hands, and his ſide; which fully convinced them of the reality of his
21. appearance; and threw them into an ecſtaſy of joy. He then bleſſed them again, and told them, he ſent them into the world to continue that gracious work of preaching the goſpel, which
22. his Father had intruſted to him: adding, with a ſignificant ſign
23. of breathing on them, a repetition of the promiſes of the Holy Ghoſt, and of the power of proclaiming remiſſion of ſins on the terms of the goſpel.

24. It happened, that Thomas was not with the diſciples, when
25. Jeſus firſt appeared to them. On his being informed therefore of it, he declared, that he would not believe it, unleſs he himſelf ſhould be an eye-witneſs; and ſhould ſee the prints of the nails in his hands, and of the ſpear in his ſide.

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22. The ſign of *breathing on them* was ſignificant, like other ſigns, in expreſſing, as nearly as could be adapted to our conceptions, the operation intended. Thus in another paſſage, *The wind bloweth, &c. ſo is every one that is born of the ſpirit* ——We cannot ſuppoſe this is meant as an *actual giving* of the Holy Ghoſt, which was formally given afterwards; but muſt refer only to that future time.

25. All theſe particulars of the reſurrection of Jeſus, and of the tranſactions afterwards, are told in the original with that genuine ſimplicity, which evinces truth; and which no other mode of relation can equal. For the ſake of uniformity however, I am conſtrained to adopt a more modern mode of expreſſion.

25. Βαλω τον δακτυλον εις ſhould not be rendered, *thruſt my hands into*; but rather, *lay my finger upon*.

A week

A week after, when the diſciples were again aſſembled in the ſame private manner, and Thomas with them; Jeſus, as before, appeared among them, and bleſſed them. He then gave Thomas the teſtimony he required; and bad him be no longer incredulous. Thomas, fully convinced, cried out in all the earneſtneſs of faith, My Lord, and my God! 26. 27. 28.

Thomas, ſaid Jeſus, thou haſt believed in my reſurrection, becauſe thou haſt ſeen me; but it is not every one who can have ſuch evidence. Bleſſed is he, who can ground his faith on ſuch teſtimony, as the wiſdom of God thinks proper to vouchſafe. 29.

Other evidences of his reſurrection Jeſus afforded his diſciples; which are not here taken notice of. But theſe are a ſufficient ground for our faith in Chriſt, as the Meſſiah. 30.

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26. *And after eight days*—that is, according to the Jewiſh reckoning, on the firſt day of the week, or our ſunday.

28. As a comment on this paſſage, I ſhall tranſcribe the following obſervations from a very valuable book.

"When Thomas, overcome by the evidence our Lord had given him, and melted by his condeſcenſion, broke out, in the language of true faith, into that exclamation, My Lord, and my God! Thomas, replied our Lord, thou haſt believed, becauſe thou haſt ſeen me: bleſſed are they that have not ſeen, and yet have believed.—This paſſage demands all our attention. Had faith ſprung from any inward impreſſion, Thomas might as well have believed before this ſenſible conviction, as after it. But he with-held his aſſent, till it was extorted from him by the evidence of his ſenſes. Upon which our Lord's remark is, *Bleſſed are they that have not ſeen, and yet have believed.* That is, the ordinary means of bleſſing mankind with the knowledge of the Chriſtian faith, will be by that evidence, which thou haſt reſiſted—the teſtimony of well-informed witneſſes. The evidence of ſenſe is indeed given to a few, that they may be my choſen witneſſes to the reſt of the world: but this kind of evidence cannot be imparted to all: the work of general converſion muſt be carried on by rational, and hiſtorical evidence.—It muſt be acknowledged that this occurrence is extremely remarkable; and ſeems to have been diſpoſed by our Lord on purpoſe to lay open to us, in one ſtriking incident, the whole doctrine of the origin of faith." Rotheram's Eſſay on Faith, p. 88.

I may add that this verſe (28) is always conſidered as a ſtrong argument in favour of the divinity of our Saviour.

30. Some ſuppoſe the evangeliſt to have concluded his goſpel at this chapter; but there ſeems to be no ground for the ſuppoſition; except that it appears his goſpel *might* have concluded very well here.

After

CHAP. XXI.

1. After this, when the diſciples met Jeſus, as he had appointed them, in Galilee, he diſcovered himſelf to them in this manner.

2. 3. 4. As Peter, and the two ſons of Zebedee, with Thomas, Nathaniel, and two other diſciples, had been exerciſing their calling of fiſhing on the lake of Tiberias; after a toilſome night, they were drawing near the ſhore. There Jeſus ſtood; but was not ſeen diſtinctly

5. 6. enough to be known. Finding they had taken nothing, he bad them caſt the net on the right ſide of the boat; which having done, they incloſed ſo great a quantity of fiſh, that they were ſcarce able to drag them.

7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. John immediately turning to Peter, ſaid, it is the Lord. On which Peter, girding his coat about him, threw himſelf into the ſea; while the other diſciples came to ſhore in the boat dragging the net, which was not broken, notwithſtanding the great number of fiſhes, which it incloſed.

On their landing they found a fire, and preparations for a meal; which was furniſhed from the fiſh they had taken. But the diſciples were under ſuch awe, and reverence at his preſence, that none of them, tho they well knew him, durſt accoſt him as their

14. maſter.——This was the third time, that Jeſus had ſhewn himſelf, in a public manner, to his diſciples, ſince his reſurrection.

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7. It is pleaſing and inſtructive to ſee that eager zeal, which St. Peter, impreſſed probably with a ſenſe of his late denial, ſhews on this occaſion, beyond any of the other diſciples; tho indeed he appears, on all occaſions, to be of a warmer temper.

11. The text ſays, *full of great fiſhes, a hundred, and fifty, and three.* With regard to the *greatneſs* of ſome of the fiſh, which are found in this lake, Haſslequiſt ſpeaks of one ſpecies, called the Charmud, or Karmud, which weighs often thirty pounds—It is *curious* alſo, tho not otherwiſe remarkable, that Oppian, in his poem on fiſhing, mentions this preciſe number, as all the kinds of fiſh, with which he was acquainted.

After

After they had eaten, Jesus, alluding to Peter's late denial of him, asked Whether his affection to him was now superior to all worldly things? And this question he put three times to him; bidding him, after each confession, Feed his flock. Peter expressed his unhappiness at his master's repeating the question: on which Jesus informed him, that he should hereafter be a great light in the Christian world; and should finally glorify God by laying down his life for the gospel. The very manner of his death Jesus pointed out, by alluding to his stretching out his hands to him; when he left the boat. Your hands, said he, shall hereafter be stretched out against your will; and another shall gird you, and carry you whither you would not. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19.

Jesus then bidding his disciples follow him, Peter turned round, and observing John near his master, asked, What should become of him? 20. 21.

If I chuse, answered Jesus, to have him wait till I come, what is that to you: follow you me. 22.

This ambiguous answer gave occasion to an opinion, that, that disciple should never die. But Jesus's speech really conveyed no such meaning; but was only a gentle rebuke to Peter for his curiosity. 23.

The disciple, about whom Peter asked the question, is the writer of this gospel; and his testimony may be depended on as 24.

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15. *Lovest thou me, more than these?* Some interpret this passage, as if Jesus had said, *more than these disciples love me?* But this would have been a question, which Peter could not possibly have answered.

17. The allegorist says, Jesus asked the question three times, alluding to the minister's threefold office of preaching, prayer, and a holy life. Others say, Christ obliged him to these three confessions, for his three denials. Perhaps nothing more was intended, than an earnest manner of speaking.

18. We have the authority of antiquity for supposing, that Peter was *crucified*.

 true.

true. But he means not to give an account of every thing, that
25. Jesus said, and did; which would engage him in a work too great for any man to attempt.

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25. Some offended at this hyperbolical mode of speaking, say the sense will allow the words to mean, *the world could not receive*, (or *comprehend*) *the books*, &c. But I think this is refinement. Many other expressions, in the sacred writers, as highly figurative as this, might be produced.

END OF THE GOSPEL BY ST. JOHN.

PREFACE

TO THE

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

WE have ſeen, in the goſpels, an account of the life, and death of our bleſſed Saviour. The Acts of the Apoſtles, on which we now enter, give us an account of the progreſs of chriſtianity after his aſcenſion.

This hiſtory is ſuppoſed to have been written by St. Luke; for which ſuppoſition we have every evidence, which a point, not abſolutely certain, can poſſeſs. It bears the marks of his pen; and all the writers of antiquity mention it as his; Clemens, Polycarp, Irenæus, Origen, and Euſebius*.

To this hiſtory it hath been objected, that it does not anſwer it's title. It is called the *Acts of the Apoſtles:* but it gives us only the hiſtory of *one* of them; and that not compleat.——In a good degree this is true: but in the firſt place, it does not appear, that this was it's original title. It is rather probable, that it was of later date; and that as the goſpels contained the *Acts of Chriſt*, this book in contraſt, was inſcribed the *Acts of the Apoſtles*.—But the title is of little moment: it is enough, if the hiſtory gives us all the knowledge on the ſubject we want.

Now the great point, which ſeemed wanting in the hiſtory of the goſpel, was it's connection with the Gentiles. The evangeliſts had given

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* See Dr. Whitby's preface to the Acts of the Apoſtles.

us the hiſtory of our bleſſed Lord; and his opening the goſpel to the Jews. But it would have been too great a chaſm in the ſacred ſtory, if after all the prophecies in favour of the Gentiles, we had been indebted to prophane hiſtory alone for our accounts of their converſion. As St. Paul therefore was the great apoſtle of the Gentiles, the hiſtory of his life was the hiſtory alſo of this great revolution in the church. So far therefore ſeems true, that the hiſtory, which we call the *Acts of the apoſtles*, might more properly have been inſcribed, *The hiſtory of the converſion of the Gentiles*.

But beſides the very intereſting light, in which this record appears, as a valuable piece of church-hiſtory; there is another, in which it muſt recommend itſelf to all chriſtians; and that is, as a very ſtrong proof of the truth of the chriſtian religion. Our Saviour choſe his diſciples from the loweſt ſtations of life: he choſe ſuch inſtruments, as were the leaſt likely, on worldly principles, to compleat his deſigns. During his life-time, they followed their maſter indeed; but they followed him with ſupine hearts. They were impreſſed neither by the ſublimity of his inſtructions, nor by the force of his example. Innocence of life was all they could pretend to. Nor wholly to this; for jealouſies, and worldly prejudices of different kinds had ſtrong poſſeſſion of them. They had no idea of the great work of redemption; but a very ſtrong one of temporal grandeur. When Jeſus inſtructed them in ſome noble theme, their thoughts were generally occupied on ſome worldly meditation: and with a ſimplicity bordering on weakneſs, they miſtook every thing their maſter ſaid.——The free-thinker diſplays his wit on theſe frequent miſtakes of the diſciples; and thinks they might at leaſt have been concealed, for the honour of *the early propagators of the goſpel*. We think otherwiſe. We think the behaviour of the diſciples was the natural behaviour of men of their character; and the recording of ſuch behaviour was no more, than was juſtly to be expected from honeſt men, who were concerned for every thing, that concerned the truth; which this eminently did. Such inſtruments were plainly unequal to the work of propagating a new religion; and their weakneſſes were recorded by themſelves, to ſhew they did not pretend to be equal to it. If they had concealed

their

their weakneſſes, they would ſo far have leſſened the evidences of the goſpel.

Let us now ſee the behaviour of theſe ſame men, as exhibited in the *Acts of the apoſtles.* Thoſe worldly ideas, which had before taken ſuch poſſeſſion of their hearts, were now totally renounced. They no longer contended, which of them ſhould be the greateſt. True chriſtian humility, a total indifference to the things of this world, and a ſerene, heavenly-mindedneſs, became the diſtinguiſhed parts of their ſeveral characters. Inſtead of that groſs ignorance, that conſtant miſtaking of their maſter's inſtructions; their minds were ſuddenly illumined; they ſaw clearly the truth; they had juſt conceptions of the whole ſcheme of redemption; and an amazing power in impreſſing the doctrines of it on the minds of others. Fears, and apprehenſions no longer threw difficulties in their way: no efforts of their enemies; not even death itſelf in all it's terrors, could affright them from their duty.

When therefore we ſee theſe ſame men repreſented under theſe different characters; and almoſt inſtantly changed from one character into the other, what are we to think? How can we account for it? Or how can it rationally be accounted for, unleſs by ſuppoſing they acted under the immediate inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt, which their Maſter had promiſed to ſend them after his aſcenſion?—Among the ſtrong evidences therefore in proof of the chriſtian religion, this certainly deſerves a very diſtinguiſhed place.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

JESUS's laſt interview with his diſciples, and aſcenſion, 316——Matthias is choſen an apoſtle, 317——deſcent of the holy Ghoſt, 318——Oppoſition of the Jews: Peter's apology; and it's beneficial effects, 318——Firſt perſecution of the chriſtian church, 321——Unanimity,

nimity, and charity of the chriſtian church: the exemplary puniſhment of Ananias, and Sapphira, 325—— Second attempt of the ſanhedrim againſt the apoſtles, 327——The election of the ſeven deacons, 328——The apology, and death of Stephen, 329——Perſecution, and flight of the church at Jeruſalem, 334——Settlement of the church at Samaria, with the tranſaction of Simon Magus, 334——Philip's tranſaction with the Ethiopian, 335——The converſion of Saul, 336——Peter viſits the churches, 339——and reſtores Tabitha, 340——The converſion of Cornelius, 340——Settlement of the church at Antioch, 344——Herod's perſecution; and the miraculous deliverance of Peter, 345——The circuit of Paul and Barnabas through the churches of the leſſer Aſia, 347——The decree made at Jeruſalem, to abſolve the Gentiles from the uſe of Jewiſh ceremonies, 353——An account of Paul's circuit through ſeveral parts of Aſia, Greece, and Syria, 358——Hiſtory of Apollos, 367——Tranſactions of Paul at Epheſus, 368——Paul's laſt circuit through Greece, and Aſia to Jeruſalem, 371——The oppoſition, and perſecution he met with at Jeruſalem, 377——He is ſent priſoner to Cæſarea, where he is tried before Felix the Roman governor, 382——He is tried before Feſtus, and appeals to Cæſar, 386——makes his apology before Agrippa, 388——his voyage, and ſhipwreck on the iſle of Malta, 391——Circumſtances, which happened there, 394——St. Paul's voyage, and journey to Rome, 396——Circumſtances, which happened there, 397.

ACTS of the APOSTLES.

WHAT I have already written, Theophilus, contains an account of the life, and doctrine of Jesus Christ, till the time of his ascension; including the forty days, which he continued with his disciples, from his resurrection; in which he gave them infallible proofs of the reality of that event. At that time also he instructed them not to leave Jerusalem, till they should receive the Holy Ghost; reminding them, of what they had heard him say, that John baptized only with water; but that he should baptize them with the Holy Spirit of God.

CHAP. I.

1. 2. 3. 4.

5.

So little however did they, at that time, understand these things, that after the great event of his resurrection, they asked him,

6.

1. *To begin to do a thing*, has been shewn by many good critics to be a Greek idiom for *doing it*.

6. Dr. Clarke rather supposes, that the disciples were not quite so gross in their ideas, as to expect a mere *temporal kingdom*; but rather that *great restoration*, which it was supposed the Messiah would effect.—Be it, as it will, it was a *curious* question, and could administer no instruction *to them*; tho the relation of the case is very instructive *to us*. *It is not for you*, said our Saviour, *to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath reserved in his own hands*: intimating by this gentle, but evasive answer, that altho an inquiry into these curious matters, could not well be considered among *very blameable things*; yet it certainly deserved *no encouragement*.

Whether he then meant to reſtore the kingdom of Iſrael to it's ancient glory?

7. 8. Jeſus told them, it was not for them to inquire into the times, and ſeaſons of things, which the Father reſerved in his own power. They had concern only with what related to themſelves; and the great errand, on which they were ſent. They ſhould propagate the goſpel, and confirm the truth of it, both among the Jews, and Gentiles; and ſhould be endowed with ſufficient power to this purpoſe, through the influence of the Holy Ghoſt.

9. This was one of the laſt diſcourſes, which Jeſus held with his diſciples. Soon afterwards he was taken from them; and in their ſight aſcended into heaven.

10. As they ſtood eagerly gazing after him; it pleaſed God to quiet their anxiety; by ſending two angels to them; who appearing in
11. a luminous form, ſaid, You diſciples of Jeſus, why ſtand you here, expecting his return? He will return; but not till that time, when he ſhall come to judge the world.

12. 13. 14. Theſe things were done on the mount of Olives, from whence the apoſtles returning to Jeruſalem, aſſembled, in acts of devotion, with the mother of Jeſus; and others of his followers.

15. At one of theſe meetings, when about one hundred and twenty diſciples were preſent, Peter ſtanding up, made the following propoſal.

16. 17. 18. 19. 20. How dreadfully, ſaid, he, Judas hath applied to himſelf that paſſage in the pſalms, in *making his habitation deſolate*, both by his unnatural treaſon, and his violent death; you all know. Let it be our buſineſs then to fulfil a ſecond paſſage in the pſalms; and

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18. *Purchaſed a field*—that is, *was the cauſe of purchaſing*. This is a common mode of ſpeaking.

as he hath *made his habitation desolate*, let us provide, that, *another may take his office*. From those therefore, who have accompanied 21. 22.
the Lord Jesus, through the whole of his ministry—from his baptism till his resurrection, let us ordain one to be a witness, together with us, of that great event.

This proposal being agreeable to the whole assembly, they resolved 23. 24. 25.
according to the ancient Jewish custom on solemn occasions, to leave the matter to the appointment of the Almighty, by a decision of lots. They proposed therefore two persons, Joseph, called Justus, and Matthias; and praying to God, as the searcher of hearts, to direct their choice, they gave out the lots. Matthias, being the 26.
chosen person, immediately joined the eleven apostles.

CHAP. II.

The time now approached, when the great promise of the Holy Ghost was to be fulfilled. The circumstances of that wonderful 1.
event were these.

As the whole body of the disciples were assembled at the celebration of the feast of pentecost; they were at first astonished with a 2.
sound, like a rushing wind, which filled the house, in which they 3.

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23. See Levit. xvi. 8—Numbers xxvi. 55—Josh. xiii. 6—Judg. xx. 9—1 Chron. xxiv. 5—Prov. xvi. 33.

25. The words, *that he might go to his own place*, have occasioned some difficulty. Many interpreters refer them to Judas, who was *to go to the punishment he deserved*. I rather, with other interpreters, refer them to the new-elected apostle; who *was to take the place assigned him*.

1. As it was provided by the providence of God, that Christ should suffer, and rise again, at the time of the passover, when the greatest number of people were assembled; so likewise, for the same reason most probably, the Holy Ghost was given at the time of the pentecost; and no doubt, the numbers of strangers who saw that great miracle, prepared the way, on their return home, for the better reception of the gospel in their several countries.——They who received the Holy Ghost, seem not only to have been the apostles; but at least the hundred and twenty disciples besides, who are mentioned Acts i. 15.

3. Διαμεριζομεναι does not properly signify *cloven*, as we translate it; but *distributed* i. e. among them. This sense however, which appears to be a corrupt one, gave the idea probably of the mitre, with which the ancient bishop was adorned.

sat.

3. ſat. This was ſucceeded by a luminous appearance, like fire; which in the form of tongues, reſted on the head of each perſon preſent.
4. The effect immediately followed. They were all inſpired with the Holy Ghoſt; and found themſelves endowed with a miraculous power of ſpeaking languages.

5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. There were, at this time, at Jeruſalem, on the occaſion of the feaſt, a numerous body of Jews, and proſelytes, from ſeveral parts of Europe, Africa, and Aſia; who being informed of this great event, had converſation with the diſciples; and were aſtoniſhed to hear them diſcourſe with every man, in his own language, on the great truths of the goſpel.

13. Oppoſition however ſoon aroſe againſt the apoſtles; and ſuch of the Jews particularly, as were prejudiced againſt the goſpel, gave out, that theſe languages, which the diſciples of Jeſus were ſaid to ſpeak, were only the effect of drunkenneſs.

14. 15. On this Peter entered largely into the affair. He firſt ſhewed the abſurdity of any ſuch ſuppoſition, were it only becauſe it was at that time, the hour of morning-ſacrifice; and it could not be ſuppoſed, they would perform divine worſhip in an act of *drunkenneſs*; when every ſerious Jew thought himſelf bound in conſcience to perform it *faſting*.—He then called to their remembrance,
16. 17. 18. the prophecy of Joel; who very diſtinctly points out the effuſion of God's Spirit in the days of the Meſſiah, on people of all con-
19. 20. ditions; reminding them, at the ſame time, of the threatenings,

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5. *Dwelling at Jeruſalem*, means only ſojourning there at that time. See the ſenſe of the original word given by Grotius. Acts ii. 5.

11. Here is no mention made of the Greek language; from whence ſome have ſuppoſed the Greek was not among the inſpired languages; as indeed it was then almoſt every where vernacular. But I ſuppoſe every language was inſpired, if unknown, and wanted in the propagation of religion.

16. See Joel ii. 28, &c.

which

which are held out, in that remarkable prophecy—the misery, which is denounced—and the destruction, which is to follow on the whole Jewish nation.——Lastly, he dwelt on the means of 21.
salvation, which the prophet promises in the following words; *Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved.*——Con- 22. 23. 24.
sider, said he, to whom the prophet alludes in this passage. That holy person, Jesus of Nazareth, who wrought so many miracles among you; and whom, tho it was his own gracious act to die for mankind, you cruelly, and unjustly put to death, hath God now raised from the dead; according to another prophecy, that of David, who represents the Messiah triumphing over the grave: 25. 26. 27.
Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad: my flesh also 28.
shall rest in hope, because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption.—The holy pro- 29.
phet, continued the apostle, could not speak this of himself; for he is both dead, and buried; and his sepulchre is with us to this day. But knowing, by the inspiration of the Holy 30.
Ghost, that God intended the Messiah should spring from his seed; 31. 32.
he undoubtedly in the spirit of prophecy, speaks of that great event, the resurrection of Jesus, of which we are witnesses.——
After his resurrection, he was received into glory; and hath now 33.
fulfilled his promise, by sending this miraculous gift upon his followers; the effect of which you now see, and hear.——His
ascension also is as much the subject of prophecy, as his resur- 34. 35.
rection. When David says, *The Lord said unto my Lord; Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool*; he cannot possibly be supposed to apply the words to himself: but to the

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22. *A man approved of God.* The original rather signifies, *a man pointed out to you by God*, through the means of miracles, &c.

25. Psalm xvi. 9.

34. Ps. cx. 1.

exalted

36. exalted power of the Meſſiah.——Let the houſe of Iſrael then, at length be aſſured, added the apoſtle, in concluſion, that that Jeſus, whom they crucified, is the undoubted Meſſiah, the redeemer, and ruler of the world.

37. Words never produced more effect on a multitude, than this ſpeech of Peter. His audience, many of whom had probably either been concerned in the death of Jeſus, or conſenting to it; were confounded by his reaſoning; and eagerly beſought him, and the reſt of the apoſtles, to inſtruct them how to avoid thoſe heavy judgments denounced by the prophet.

38. Peter earneſtly exhorted them to be baptiſed in the faith of Chriſt; and by amending their lives, to make themſelves fit objects for the
39. remiſſion of their ſins, and the reception of the Holy Spirit; which, with the other promiſes of the goſpel, were offered to them; and to all the faithful people of God, wherever diſperſed.

40. To this he added other exhortations; frequently reminding them of the judgments, which ſhould ſpeedily overthrow the Jewiſh nation; and which he warned them to endeavour with ſincere repentance to avoid.

41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. At the concluſion of theſe exhortations, not fewer than three thouſand were baptized, and embraced the faith of Chriſt. The generality

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39. *To all that were afar off.* By this expreſſion the *apoſtle* probably had reference only to the diſperſed Iſraelites; but the *Holy Spirit* might have reference to the Gentiles. See Epheſ. ii. 13.

41. It is probable, the other apoſtles alſo might aſſiſt in making the ſame exhortations to other bodies of ſtrangers, and that they all contributed to this wonderful, and ſudden converſion.

42. *Breaking of bread* here, is not generally conſidered by interpreters in this ſenſe. But, I think, from it's being placed between the *apoſtle's doctrine*, and *prayer*, it cannot well have the acceptation of a common meal; tho, I think, common meals ſeem to be underſtood by the ſame expreſſion in v. 46.

45. Many interpreters do not ſuppoſe, they had a community in all things; but I think from the caſe of Ananias, that it is very plain they had; tho it as plainly appears, from what

generality of the people indeed were only aſtoniſhed at what they had ſeen; but the true believers continued with great ſincerity in their profeſſion—joining with the apoſtles in prayer, and the celebration of the Lord's ſupper—praiſing, and thanking God for his mercies—ſelling their poſſeſſions, that all might have a community in worldly things——and uniting with each other in every inſtance of love, and kindneſs.

This generous behaviour drew upon the infant-church the reſpect and reverence of all obſervers: and numbers daily joined themſelves to their communion.

CHAP. III.

The peace and happineſs, which the church enjoyed, endured not long. It was firſt diſturbed on the following occaſion. 1. 2. 3.

As Peter, and John were going to prayer in the temple; a lame man, who had been a cripple from his youth and was laid at what was called the *Beautiful-gate*, every day, by his friends, begged for alms. As he expected, from the attention, with which the apoſtles beheld him, to receive ſome preſent relief, Peter told him, that as for the riches of this world, he had none to give; but that what was in his power, he ſhould confer on him. He then bad him, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt of Nazareth, ariſe 4. 5. 6.

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what St. Peter ſaid on that occaſion, that this communication, was a *voluntary* one: and from many paſſages of ſcripture, we may gather, that it was meant only to be a temporary one. In the goſpels, and epiſtles, there is always a diſtinction ſuppoſed between poor, and rich; nor could the affairs of the world poſſibly be carried on without it. At this early time indeed when all charity ceaſed towards Chriſtians, but among themſelves, a *communication* of property ſeems to have been neceſſary.

47. *Such as ſhould be ſaved* ſays the text: but not ſuch as ſhould be ſaved *by the determined will of God*; but ſuch as (v. 40. 42) *ſaved themſelves from that untoward generation*, by continuing in the apoſtles doctrine.——Beſides τȣ; σωζομενȣ; cannot with any propriety be rendered, ſuch as *ſhould be ſaved*; *but ſuch as were ſaved*: that is, ſuch as were placed by baptiſm, faith, and repentance, in a ſtate of ſalvation; but this ſtate they muſt of courſe maintain afterwards by a holy life.

7. 8. and walk. On this the man immediately received perfect ſtrength; and went with them into the temple to praiſe God for his mercy.

9. 10. 11. This great miracle occaſioned a vaſt concourſe of people in Solomon's porch; where Peter, and John, and the man, as they came out of the temple, were preſently ſurrounded.

12. 13. 14. 15. 16. Peter thinking this a proper occaſion to inſtruct the multitude, thus ſpoke.

Men of Iſrael, ſaid he, be not ſurpriſed at what you have juſt ſeen; nor conſider us as more than the inſtruments of this great miracle. That Jeſus, whom you denied before Pilate, and by wicked ſuggeſtions put to death, hath God raiſed from the dead. We are the witneſſes of his reſurrection; and alledge this great miracle done in his name, and through faith in him, as a proof
17. of that wonderful event.——And yet I will not ſuppoſe, that the murderers of the holy Jeſus, knew whom they put to death. Be
18. that as it may, the prophecies, which foretold the Meſſiah's death,
19. 20. 21. were thus compleated.—Fully convinced then, from this miracle, of the completion of theſe prophecies, let me exhort you to faith, repentance, and holy lives. Let me exhort you alſo to the recollection of another great event coming forward—the general doom, and judgment of mankind, by that ſame Jeſus, whoſe goſpel is now preached.
22. 23. Hear what your great lawgiver, Moſes himſelf, ſays on this head; *a prophet ſhall the Lord your God raiſe up unto you of your brethren,*

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16. It may be ſuppoſed, that as the impotent man had lain long at the gate of the temple, he had had frequent opportunities of hearing of the miracles of Jeſus.

This verſe is a ſtriking example of the inaccuracies, which improper pointing ſometimes introduces into the ſacred text. If the middle part of the verſe were pointed properly, the ſenſe, which is now embarraſſed, would be eaſy. Τουτον ον θεωρειτε, καὶ οἰδατε, εστερεωσε. Το ονομα, &c. Θεος, in the former verſe, is nominative caſe to εστερεωσε.

22. Deut. xviii. 18, 19.

like

like unto me: him ſhall you hear; and every ſoul that will not hear that prophet, ſhall be cut off from the people.—Nor did Moſes alone 24.
predict theſe things; but all the ſucceeding prophets unite in 25. 26.
declaring, that to you firſt, as the children of the covenant hath God publiſhed ſalvation through Jeſus Chriſt, if you are convinced CHAP. IV.
by his reſurrection, and will lead holy lives.

While Peter was thus ſpeaking to the people, the prieſts, and 1. 2. 3.
Sadducees, and officers of the temple, came upon him, and ſeized both him and John; and threw them into priſon; being greatly diſturbed at finding the doctrine of the reſurrection preached; and at it's acquiring even additional ſtrength by the event of the reſurrection of Jeſus.

This violence however did not prevent the effects of the apoſtles 4.
exhortations; for the number of proſelytes was now increaſed to about five thouſand.

The next day the chief prieſts, and elders called a council; and 5. 6. 7.
ſending for the apoſtles, bad them give a plain account of their tranſaction with the lame man, which had occaſioned ſo much diſturbance.

With the dignity of an inſpired apoſtle, Peter told them, that 8. 9.
to this enquiry a ready anſwer might be given. Through the name 10.
of Jeſus Chriſt, ſaid he, whom you crucified, and whom God raiſed from the dead, hath this great miracle been performed. He is 11.
that ſtone, which was ſet at naught by you builders; and which is notwithſtanding, the head of the corner—the only origin, and 12.
ſource of ſalvation to mankind.

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4. It does not appear that five thouſand *new* proſelytes were added; but that what were now added, made the number five thouſand. Eraſmus is of this opinion. Jam enim numerus credentium accreverat uſque ad quinque virorum millia.

13. The Jewiſh prieſts being well informed, that the two apoſtles had been the companions of Jeſus; and knowing them to be obſcure, illiterate men, were aſtoniſhed at the dignity, and ſpirit with
14. which Peter ſpoke. At the ſame time, ſeeing the man, who had been healed, ſtanding before them, they were unable to deny the fact.

15. 16. 17. 18. Commanding the apoſtles therefore to go aſide, they conſulted what was beſt to be done; and at length reſolved to forbid them to preach any longer in the name of Jeſus.

19. But Peter and John, with great firmneſs, bad them conſider,
20. whether it were right to liſten to God, or them? and gave them to underſtand, that they certainly ſhould continue to give their teſtimony to the great truths, which had been intruſted to them.

21. 22. The chief prieſts however, ſatisfied with threatning the apoſtles a ſecond time, ſet them at liberty; being afraid of the people, on whom the reſtoration of a man, who had been forty years lame, had had a wonderful effect.

23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. The apoſtles being diſmiſſed, retired to their company; and reported what had happened. In conſequence of this deliverance the church united in a thankſgiving to God.

They praiſed him for all his wonderful works—and particularly for the completion of his holy promiſes in the ineffectual efforts of all the enemies of religion—and concluded with begging God's aſſiſtance in giving them courage, and ability to preach his word; and power to confirm the truth of it by miracles.

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13. It is no wonder they were ſurprized; for more convincing pieces of compoſition than Peter's ſpeeches, are not eaſily to be found.

19. We have a noble expreſſion of the ſame kind, which Plato puts in the mouth of Socrates: He tells his judges, that he was determined to avouch his doctrine; and that for this reaſon; πειϑομαι τω Θεω, μαλλον η υμιν.

When

When their prayer was concluded, the place, where they had 31.
aſſembled, was ſhaken as before, by a ſtrong wind; and the Holy Ghoſt fell on all who were preſent, inſpiring them with new powers to continue the great work, in which they were engaged.

In the mean time, while the apoſtles bore teſtimony to the truth 32. 33.
of the goſpel, particularly to the reſurrection of Chriſt; love, and kindneſs, in the higheſt degree, were exerciſed among all, who embraced the faith. No man claimed a property in any thing, he poſſeſſed. So that, of courſe, neither ſuperfluity, nor want, exiſted 34.
among them. The common ſtock was put into the hands of the 35.
apoſtles, who diſtributed it according to their diſcretion.—Of thoſe, 36. 37.
who thus converted their eſtates into public property, the moſt conſiderable was Joſes of Cyprus, a Levite, who ſold ſome lands, which he poſſeſſed in that iſland; and brought the produce to the apoſtles. This holy perſon obtained afterwards the ſurname of Barnabas.

Among other profeſſors of chriſtianity, there was a certain perſon of CHAP. V.
the name of Ananias, who with his wife Sapphira, wiſhed to gain 1. 2.
the credit of this diſintereſted behaviour, without ſubjecting themſelves to the worldly inconveniences of it. Ananias therefore ſold his lands; and out of the produce, brought a *certain part* to the
apoſtles, as if it had been the *whole*. But inſtead of meeting the 3.

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31. It is left undetermined by St. Luke, what number of new proſelytes were aſſembled on this occaſion, and received the Holy Ghoſt. It ſeems moſt probable, that the whole five thouſand were preſent. The only difficulty is, how ſo great a number ſhould be accommodated in one place.

35. The ſacrifices of the temple, of which the common people partook, were a great relief to the Jewiſh poor. As the chriſtian converts were deprived of this, ſome other relief was the more neceſſary. Hence community of property ſeems to have ariſen.

approbation

approbation he expected, Peter gave him a ſevere rebuke, for at-
4. tempting to deceive the Spirit of God. Before the land was ſold, ſaid he, was it not your own? And afterwards, was not the price your own likewiſe? Who demanded it of you? You have not endeavoured to deceive man only; but the Holy Spirit of God.

5. On hearing this, Ananias fell down inſtantly dead; which threw a religious fear on all, who were preſent.

6. 7. About three hours after he had been carried out to his burial,
8. his wife knowing nothing of the matter, came in: and Peter aſking her, Whether the price, that had been brought, was the full value
9. of the land? She affirmed, it was. Then Peter ſpoke to her in the ſame ſevere language, in which he had ſpoken to her huſband; and taxed her with the great ſin of endeavouring to deceive the
10. Holy Spirit of God. On this ſhe too fell down dead; and was carried out, and buried near her huſband.

11. 12. 13. 14. The exemplary puniſhment, which God thought proper to inflict on this occaſion, added great weight and reverence to the apoſtolic character; no man daring from henceforward, to unite himſelf with the apoſtles *on any worldly motives*. Multitudes however of true believers were daily added to the church; through the efficacy of the miracles, which were daily wrought in the moſt public

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10. Some exemplary puniſhment ſeemed neceſſary to prevent people's joining the apoſtles on falſe pretences; and diſcrediting the Chriſtian religion in it's infancy by worldly motives. This effect, as we are told (ver. 13) immediately followed.— But this offers no argument in favour of perſecution. Who inflicted the puniſhment? was it man, or God?

11. There is ſome confuſion in the order of the verſes here; which may be reſtored in the following manner, which Bowyer tells us, he had from the mouth of Bp. Sherlock.

11. *And great fear came upon all the church, and as many as heard theſe things.* 14 *And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.* 12 *And they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.* 13 *And of the reſt durſt no one join himſelf to them: but the people magnified them.* 12 *And by the hands of the apoſtles were many ſigns, and wonders wrought;* 15 *inſomuch, that they brought, &c.*" See Bowyer's conjectures.

manner

manner—often in the ſtreets; where the ſick were brought in 15.
couches; and found it ſufficient to receive the ſhadow of Peter, as 16.
he paſſed by. From ſeveral parts of the country alſo, around Jeruſalem, ſick people were brought to the apoſtles; and immediately found a cure.

The chief prieſts, and Sadducees, of which ſect were moſt of the 17.
Jewiſh doctors, being exceedingly provoked at theſe proceedings, 18.
ſeized the apoſtles again, and threw them into priſon. But it 19.
pleaſed God to deliver them in the night, by an angel; under whoſe 20.
direction in the morning they went, as uſual, into the temple, and preached.

The chief prieſts, in the mean time, called a council; and ſent 21.
to the priſon for the apoſtles. The officers returned with an ac- 22. 23.
count, that they had found the priſon ſhut, and guarded; but that the priſoners were gone.

While the council were perplexed at this unaccountable event; 24.
they received information, that the men, whom they had impriſoned 25.
the day before, were, at that very time, preaching in the temple. 26. 27. 28.
On this they ſent a guard, and brought them without violence (for they feared the people) and queſtioned them for their inſolence in preaching a religion, which the council had forbidden them to propagate any farther. You have filled Jeruſalem, ſaid they, with your doctrines; and ſeem deſirous of bringing this man's blood upon us.

The apoſtles anſwered with that firmneſs, which they had ſhewn 29.
before, that it was their duty to obey God, rather than man. The 30. 31.
ſame Jeſus, ſaid they, whom you crucified, hath God raiſed from the dead, and exalted to be the Saviour of mankind, through the conditions of faith, and repentance. We are the witneſſes of 32.
his reſurrection; as is alſo the Holy Ghoſt; the effects of whoſe gracious operations you have ſeen ſo wonderfully diſplayed.

This

33. This bold language irritated the council ſo much, that ſome of the warmeſt of them ſeemed to think they ought immediately to proceed capitally againſt the apoſtles.

34. There ſat at that time, in the council, an eminent doctor, named
35. Gamaliel; who removing the apoſtles, warned the council to be
36. cautious what they did in this matter. We have heard of many people, ſaid he, who have profeſſed themſelves the deliverers of Iſrael; and whoſe attempts have come to nothing. Such was Theudas, who got together about four hundred men; but periſhed
37. in his enterprize, together with his company. After him appeared Judas of Galilee, who drew together a great body of people: but he too loſt his life, and all his followers were diſperſed. Be
38. adviſed therefore, and let theſe people alone. If their deſigns depend only on human means, like other deſigns of the ſame kind, they
39. will come to nothing. But if they are of God, you yourſelves may be cruſhed by oppoſing, what it will not be in your power to prevent.

40. This prudent advice had great weight with the aſſembly. They called in the apoſtles therefore, and ordering them to be ſcourged, diſmiſſed them with ſtrict injunctions to preach no more in the
41. name of Jeſus. They however, regardleſs of any menaces, and counting it matter of joy, that they were thought worthy of ſuffering
42. for their religion, continued both publicly, and privately to preach the goſpel.

CHAP. VI.

1. Soon after this, ſome unquietneſs aroſe in the chriſtian church (now become conſiderable) from another cauſe.

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36. Joſephus mentions a perſon of the name of Theudas, who made an inſurrection; but it was ten years after this time. Dr. Lardner (Cred. VI. p. 403) ſuppoſes two inſurgents of that name. Archbp. Uſher ſuppoſes it a miſtake for another Judas, who made an inſurrection, according to Joſephus, a little after the death of Herod the great.

1. Theſe Jews commonly ſpoke the Greek language, and were therefore called Ελληνισται: the native Greeks were called Ελληνες. But ſome are of opinion that the Ελληνισται were heathen converts to Judaiſm.

Among

Among the chriſtian proſelytes were many foreign Jews, who complained, that their poor did not receive an equal proportion from the common ſtock, with ſuch Jews, as were natives of Judea.

The apoſtles, inquiring into this matter, called a general aſſembly 2. 3. 4.
of the church; and urging their own neceſſary avocations, in the miniſtry of the goſpel, as not allowing them to attend to the diſtribution of alms; deſired them to chuſe, from the whole body of chriſtians, ſeven men of eminent ſanctity, and wiſdom, whom they might appoint over this buſineſs.

The propoſal pleaſed the whole aſſembly; and they choſe Stephen, 5.
a man of great piety, and chriſtian zeal; Philip; Procorus; Nicanor; Timon; Parmenas; and Nicolas, a proſelyte of Antioch. 6.
Theſe ſeven were brought to the apoſtles; who approved the choice; and, after ſolemn prayer, confirmed them in their office.

In the mean time, the goſpel continued to make a great progreſs; 7.
and began now to gain ground among the higher ranks of people; many even of the prieſts having embraced it.

Among the ſeveral profeſſors of it, no man, except the apoſtles, 8.
contributed ſo much to extend it's influence as Stephen; who did not confine himſelf merely to the ſtation, which had been aſſigned him; but with wonderful force of argument, as well as by miracles, diſplayed the power of the goſpel.

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3. This verſe is much uſed in the argument about church government; tho it ſeems to carry no authority in the queſtion. The deſignation of theſe ſeven men was undoubtedly an apoſtolic act: but they ſeem to have been deſigned only to the office of almoners. It is remarkable however, (whether it happened by chance, or was intended) that in eight or nine editions of our Engliſh bible (between the years 1650 and 1680) the word, καταςτησομεν *we appoint*, is tranſlated *ye appoint*.

5. From the names it ſeems probable, that ſome of theſe were Ελληνιςται; which ſhews it to have been an election of great judgment. The laſt was certainly a foreigner.

9. There were at that time in Jeruſalem, a body of foreign Jews, both Africans, and Aſiatics, who had a ſynagogue appropriated to themſelves, called the Synagogue of freedom. Theſe men frequently engaged in diſpute with Stephen on the moſaic diſpen-
10. 11. 12. 13. ſation: but not being able to oppoſe him by argument, they commenced a regular proſecution againſt him; and ſtirring up many of the Scribes and Phariſees, and a large body of people, they brought him before the Sanhedrim; and accuſed him, by witneſſes,
14. whom they had ſuborned, of having ſpoken contemptuouſly both of the *temple, and the Jewiſh law*; and of aſſerting that *Jeſus of*
15. *Nazareth was come to deſtroy both.*——The countenance of Stephen, while he ſtood before the council, and heard ſo much malicious teſtimony againſt him, was full of that divine, and heavenly compoſure, which drew the attention of the whole aſſembly.

CHAP. VII.

1. After the witneſſes had been heard, the high-prieſt aſked him, What he had to ſay in his defence?

Stephen in a long apology, laboured to convince his hearers, that God was no *reſpecter of places*——that their fathers had worſhipped in various countries; and that even the temple itſelf was
2. built late in the hiſtory of the Jews—He traced the divine diſpenſations

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9. It is probable that all the foreign Jews had ſynagogues appropriated to themſelves; ſome of which ſynagogues, as many Jews were freemen of Rome, might derive their title from thence. See Lardner's Credib. part I. ch. iii. Profeſſor Gerdes ſuppoſes they took their name from Libertina, a city of Africa; which Lardner ſeems to think a probable ſuppoſition.

2. As Stephen, was accuſed of conſpiring to deſtroy the *Jewiſh temple, and the law*, it ſeems to be the moſt *obvious* intention of his thus recapitulating the hiſtory of the patriarchs, to ſhew, that the temple eſtabliſhment had not always exiſted; and that there was no neceſſity to ſuppoſe it always ſhould exiſt; as the Jews eſpecially had rendered themſelves ſo unworthy of this divine diſpenſation by perſecuting the prophets, and putting their Saviour to death.

Some interpreters give a different view of Stephen's argument. They ſay, the drift of it was to caution the Jews againſt rejecting Chriſt, as they had rejected Moſes, and the prophets. This, no doubt, makes a part of his argument; but it does not ſeem the *purport* of it.

Others

penſations from the time of Abraham. That great patriarch, ſaid he, firſt worſhipped God in Meſopotamia. From thence he was ſent to Haram; and afterwards into the land which you now inhabit. But he had no poſſeſſion in it; reſting merely on a promiſe, that his family, after ſuffering the miſeries of bondage, ſhould worſhip God there, as they had done in other places. But the covenant of circumciſion was given long before; and that rite was obſerved by Abraham in his pilgrimage, juſt as it is obſerved by you at Jeruſalem.——The next migration of our fathers, was into Egypt. Here Joſeph, under the immediate influence of God, ſaved the land of Egypt, and all his father's houſe from the effects of a famine; and here Jacob, at his ſon's requeſt, brought his family to ſojourn. Here thoſe holy patriarchs worſhipped the God of their fathers; and here they finiſhed their earthly courſe. ——The evils of their poſterity increaſing, as the people multiplied; Moſes, who had been educated by Pharoah's daughter in the learning of Egypt; and had been obliged to fly the country for

3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19.

Others again ſuppoſe, that Stephen's great intention was to exhibit Joſeph, and Moſes as types of Chriſt; who were both rejected by their brethren, as Chriſt alſo was; and correſponded with him in many inſtances of their lives.—This too he certainly has in view; but this does not make the drift of his argument.

From theſe different opinions, it is plain however, that the apology of Stephen is a difficult paſſage of ſcripture; and that it is hard to make out what the chief intention of it was. For myſelf, I am moſt inclined to the interpretation I have given; and have therefore abridged the detail of the hiſtory of the Jews, that Stephen's argument might appear with more force. At the ſame time, I think it very probable, that he might *intend covertly* to ſhew the Jews, that by rejecting Chriſt, and his apoſtles, they were purſuing the very ſteps of their forefathers, who had rejected the prophets.

There are other difficulties, tho I think of little importance, in this apology of Stephen. They regard chiefly the dates and numbers mentioned in the 4th, 6th, and 14th verſes; and the burial of the patriarchs in the 16th.

7. *Will I judge.* Bp. Pearce obſerves, that the law *tries, ſentences,* and *executes*; and that the word κριμα relates ſometimes to one, and ſometimes to another, of theſe operations.

20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. an ineffectual endeavour to assist his countrymen; was afterwards called by God to lead them out of bondage by a high hand.——But even Moses himself, the founder of the Jewish government, who received the law from God, through the mediation of an angel, is so far from supposing his institution to be of perpetual obligation, that he mentions the Messiah, under the title of a 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. great prophet, who was to arise after him.——Consider also how unworthy this sinful nation hath made itself of a perpetual establishment. From the times of Aaron, and the golden calf, recollect it's constant succession of idolatries, and rebellions. It 44. is true, our fathers had the ark under a tabernacle in the wilder- 45. ness, built after the fashion, which God had appointed——it is true also, that they carried it with them into the land of promise; and carefully maintained it, till the days of David; and afterwards 46. 47. till the days of Solomon; who was permitted to build that temple, 48. 49. 50. which his father only designed.——All this is true; but it is as true, that God hath all along declared by his prophets, that he will not be considered, as dwelling in the narrow limits of a temple made with hands; but as filling the universe, which he

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20. *And was exceeding fair:* Αστειος τω Θεω. This mode of expression is agreeable to the Hebrew idiom. Great cedars are called, *cedars of God.* Ps. lxxx. 10, and great mountains, *mountains of God.* Ps. xxxvi. 6.—Josephus tells us, that nobody could look at Moses, without being struck with his beauty.

22. Moses is said to be mighty in *deeds*, as well as *words*; which some have imagined to allude to a story told by Josephus, that upon an invasion of Egypt by the Ethiopians, Moses was appointed general of the Egyptian forces, and drove the invaders back, with great slaughter. Antiq lib. II. 10.

30. The burning bush, which was not consumed, is thought by many to have been a very apposite sign to Moses. The people whom he was to relieve, were indeed greatly oppressed: but it was as easy for God to deliver them from that oppression, as it was for him to prevent the bush from being consumed by the fire, that was in the midst of it. The one was a sign of the other.

43. The phrase, *taking up the tabernacle of Moloc*, relates to the practice of carrying about the image of the God Moloc, on solemn occasions in a shrine.

hath

hath created—as making heaven his throne, and earth his foot-ſtool.——Stephen concluded his apology by telling the council; 51. 52. 53.
that he foreſaw they would reſiſt the Holy Spirit of God; and oppoſe the truth, as their fathers had done before them. The only difference was, that their fathers had perſecuted thoſe, who prophecied of the Meſſiah: while they had perſecuted the Meſſiah himſelf: and that, in ſhort, they were the perſons, not he, who *had ſet at naught both Moſes and his law.*

This ſevere charge threw the council into the utmoſt rage.—— 54.
Stephen, ſeeing to what lengths their malice would ariſe, told 55. 56. 57.
them, he was prepared for the utmoſt effects of it—that he ſaw heaven opened—and Jeſus ſtanding at the right hand of God.

On this they cried out with loud voices—ſtopped their ears, as if ſuch blaſphemy was not fit to be heard; and ruſhing upon 58. 59. 60.
him with one accord, dragged him out of the city, and ſtoned him. He, in the mean time, throughly impreſſed with the ſpirit of the religion he had embraced, prayed for his murderers, and CHAP. VIII.
recommended his ſoul into the hands of his Saviour.——They, 1. 2. 3. 4.
who ſtoned him, gave their garments in charge to a young man of the name of Saul; who ſtood by as an aſſenting ſpectator of the death of Stephen.——After the Jews had thus ſated their vengeance, Stephen's friends were ſuffered to carry his dead body to burial; which they performed with great lamentations.

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58. This ſeems not to have been a *judicial*, but a *tumultuary* action; what the Jews called the *judgment of zeal*. They could not put a criminal to death, without the cognizance o the Roman governor. Beauſobre is the only commentator, I recollect, who is of a different opinion: but his reaſons, do not appear convincing.——Some however are of opinion, that the *judgment of zeal* was permitted by the Romans: but this, I think, is very doubtful.

59. The dying words of Stephen contain ſo plain an act of worſhip to Chriſt, that it ſeems difficult to evade them. They are not ſo ſtrong indeed in our tranſlation, as in the original, where the word *God* is not found.

The

The death of this holy man was the beginning of a violent perſecution againſt the church at Jeruſalem; which ſeparated in different ways to avoid it. None of any eminence continued in the city, except the apoſtles.

Among ſuch as took the moſt active part in this perſecution, was Saul, who was very zealous in executing the orders of the Sanhedrim.

Theſe efforts however to deſtroy Chriſtianity, tended only to propagate it the more, by the preaching of thoſe, who fled into other countries.

5. 6. 7. Among the moſt eminent of theſe preachers, was Philip, one of the ſeven deacons, who had been ordained by the apoſtles. This holy man went to Samaria; and preached the goſpel there with ſuch power, and confirmed the truth of it with ſo many
8. miracles; that the people univerſally attended to him; and the whole city was filled with religious joy.

9. 10. 11. There dwelt in Samaria, at that time, one Simon, a magician; who had deceived the people by his pretences to miraculous powers; making them believe, he was ſomething more than human. How-
12. 13. ever, this perſon himſelf ſeemed ſo convinced by the preaching, and miracles of Philip, that he was baptized, as others had been; and profeſſed himſelf a diſciple.

14. 15. 16. 17. Some time after, the apoſtles, at Jeruſalem, hearing of the ſucceſs of the goſpel in Samaria, ſent Peter, and John to give weight to the miniſtry there; and through the prayers of theſe apoſtles, all the new proſelytes, who had yet only been baptized in the name of Jeſus, received the Holy Ghoſt.

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5. The old town of Samaria was at this time deſtroyed; ſo that Philip muſt have gone to ſome town in the *diſtrict of Samaria.*

When

When Simon ſaw, that the apoſtles, by laying on their hands, 18. 19.
conferred the Holy Ghoſt, and the power of working miracles; he made them an offer of a ſum of money to grant him that privilege.

But Peter, with great indignation, rebuked him, for ſuppoſing, 20.
that the gift of God could be purchaſed by money. He told 21.
him, that he was yet totally unacquainted with the ſpirit of the
goſpel; and bad him repent of his ſins, and pray to God to for- 22. 23.
give the wickedneſs of his heart.

Simon ſeemed greatly affected with the ſeverity of this rebuke; 24.
and begged the apoſtles to join in prayer with him, that God would avert the evils, which they had threatened.

Soon after, the two apoſtles returned to Jeruſalem, preaching 25.
the goſpel in ſuch of the Samaritan cities, as they paſſed through.

Philip, in the mean time, was ſent on a different errand. He 26.
was ordered by the direction of an angel, to go to the road, which
leads from Jeruſalem to Gaza, as it enters the deſert. There a 27. 28.
perſon of great authority, in the court of Candace, queen of Ethiopia, was returning home from Jeruſalem, where he had been
worſhipping (as all ſerious proſelytes were accuſtomed to do at
the great feaſts) and Philip was ordered by the Spirit to join him. 29. 30.

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25. It rather ſeems, that the account of theſe two apoſtles coming from Jeruſalem is introduced here for the ſake of the relation of Simon Magus; about whom there might have been probably, at that time, ſome miſrepreſentations, which it was thought neceſſary to obviate.

26. Arrian, in his hiſtory of Alexander, mentions Gaza *as the laſt town, that was inhabited, before you enter the deſert between Phenicia and Egypt.*

27. As the word Ευνεχος has an ambiguous ſenſe, ſignifying alſo ſometimes a chamberlain, I leave it undetermined.

27. Pliny ſpeaking of an Iſland, appendent on Ethiopia, under the name of Meroe, tells us, that Candace reigned there, quod nomen multis jam annis, ad reginas tranſit.

Hiſt. Nat. Lib. VI.

He

He found the Ethiopian reading the prophecy of Iſaiah, and aſked
31. him, if he underſtood what he read? The other anſwered, he did
not; and conceiving Philip to be a perſon of information, deſired
him to come up to him into his chariot, and explain it. The
32. 33. paſſage he read, was in the fifty-third chapter: *He was led as a
ſheep to the ſlaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his ſhearer, ſo
he opened not his mouth: in his humiliation, his judgment was taken
away; and who ſhall declare his generation? for his life is taken
34. from the earth.* Now of whom, ſaid the Ethiopian, doth the
prophet ſpeak—of himſelf, or of ſome other perſon?

35. Philip, beginning at this paſſage, opened to him the diſpen-
36. ſation of the goſpel; and by his diſcourſe produced ſuch an effect
on the Ethiopian, that when they came to a pool of water, he
37. deſired, he might immediately be admitted to baptiſm. Philip
aſked him, if he believed ſincerely in Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of
38. God. The Ethiopian profeſſing his faith, was accordingly bap-
39. 40. tized. After the ceremony, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip
to Azotas; where he preached the goſpel; and from thence in
all the other towns in his way to Cæſarea. In the mean time
CHAP. IX. the Ethiopian returned home full of religious joy.

1. 2. During theſe tranſactions, Saul, who was one of the moſt zealous
perſecutors of the church, having heard that many Chriſtians had
fled

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33. *A perſon's judgment being taken away,* was a ſort of proverb for *being oppreſſed.* See Job xxvii. 2.

40. The miraculous miſſion of Philip to Gaza, to meet the Ethiopian, was, no doubt, an intervention of Providence to prepare the way for the goſpel in Ethiopia; where, as Euſebius informs us, this treaſurer of queen Candace firſt planted it. The manner, in which Philip was conveyed away from the Ethiopian, ſeems to have been intended as a miracle, to convince him of the truth of the religion, he had juſt embraced.

2. Damaſcus in Syria ſtands upon a plain ſo extenſive (as Maundrel informs us) that the mountains which ſurround ſome parts of it, are only juſt diſcernable. The river Barrady which

fled to Damaſcus, deſired letters from the high-prieſt to the ſynagogue there, ordering them to deliver to him all the Jews of that perſuaſion; that he might bring them to be puniſhed at Jeruſalem.

Having received a commiſſion, he ſet out on his journey. 3.
But as he approached Damaſcus, a ſudden light from heaven ſhone
round him; and as he fell to the ground, he heard a voice ſaying, 4.
Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me? He had recollection enough 5.
to aſk, Who it was, that ſpoke? The voice anſwered, I am
Jeſus, whom thou perſecuteſt. Why oppoſeſt thou thus the
will of God? Saul overwhelmed with amazement, and ſtruck 6.
at once with horror at his late conduct, aſked trembling, What
he ſhould do? and was ordered to go to Damaſcus; and it ſhould
there be told him.

In the mean time, the men, who travelled with him ſtood 7.
ſpeechleſs; hearing a voice, but not underſtanding the import
of it.

As for Saul, as ſoon as he had raiſed himſelf from the ground, 8.
he found he was deprived of his ſight; and was obliged to be

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which iſſues from the mountain of Antilibanus, runs through the plain; and arriving at Damaſcus, divides into three ſtreams: the intermediate one paſſes through the town; and the other two, on each ſide, circle it's ſuburbs. The city, as you approach it, makes a grand appearance; it's moſques, ſteeples, and minorets being very ſtately.

5. Lord Barrington (miſcel. ſac. eſſ. 3) ingeniouſly ſuppoſes, that Paul being a learned Jew, knew this light to be the Shechinah; and that it imported the divine preſence. He therefore with confidence aſked, *Who art thou Lord?——It is hard for thee, to kick againſt the pricks*, was a proverbial expreſſion, ſignifying impotent rage, that hurts only ourſelves.

7. When St. Paul gives an account of this viſion at Jeruſalem, (Acts xxii. 9) he ſays, the men *heard not the voice*; tho in this verſe, he ſays *they did hear it*. The contradiction is very eaſily reconciled by ſuppoſing, they were ſo terrified, that they heard nothing articulate.

8. Saul's being deprived of ſight, and reſtored to it again, expreſſes, as ſome ſuppoſe, the idea of that darkneſs, in which he had formerly lived; and of the light which now ſhone upon him.

9. led into Damaſcus; where he continued three days in a ſtate of contrition, prayer, and faſting.

10. 11. 12. At the end of that time, a chriſtian, of the name of Ananias, who lived at Damaſcus, was ſent by a heavenly viſion to reſtore him
13. 14. to ſight. Ananias, knowing the character of Saul, could not help
15. 16. 17. expreſſing his apprehenſions of him. But he was given to underſtand how great a converſion had been wrought in him; and to what eminence he ſhould hereafter ariſe in the chriſtian church, as the great apoſtle of the Gentiles. Ananias, thus inſtructed, went to Saul, and told him, that Jeſus, who had ſpoken to him on the road, reſtored him to ſight; and that he ſhould receive the Holy Ghoſt.

His ſight being accordingly reſtored, he was baptized; and
18. 19. recovered by degrees from that ſtate of diſtreſs, into which he had been thrown. Then joining himſelf to the diſciples, he began
20. to preach the goſpel, to the great aſtoniſhment of all, who had
21. known his former life; and applying all his learning in the Jewiſh
22. law, to the ſupport of chriſtianity, he confounded the Jews, who dwelt at Damaſcus; and proved plainly, from their own ſcriptures, that Jeſus was the Meſſiah.

Some time after, the Jews laid in wait for him, and watched
23. 24. 25. at the gate of the city to ſeize, and deſtroy him. But Saul, being informed of their intention, eſcaped over the wall in a baſket, and went to Jeruſalem.

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11. *Tarſus* was a town in Cilicia, famous both for it's trade, and for being a ſeat of learn- It is ſuppoſed to be the old Tarſhiſh, mentioned ſo often in the old Teſtament.

20. Paul *preached Chriſt in the ſynagogues that he is the Son of God:* the preciſe meaning here is, that he affirmed and proved that *that Jeſus, was the Meſſiah, who had been crucified at Jeruſalem.*

Here

Here alſo he was at firſt received with ſuſpicion; till Barnabas 26. 27. 28.
carried him to the apoſtles, and related all the circumſtances of his converſion, and faith; on which he continued to preach in concert with them.——Here too with great ſtrength of argument, 29.
he diſputed with the Grecian Jews; who attempting to ſeize him, the apoſtles thought it proper to ſend him to Tarſus. 30.

At this time, the churches, which were now multiplied, had 31.
peace; and rejoiced in the goodneſs of the Lord.

Peter taking the opportunity of this quiet ſeaſon, made a pro- 32.
greſs among them; and went firſt to Lydda.

Here he found a perſon of the name of Eneas who had been 33. 34.
eight years a paralytic, whom he healed in the name of Jeſus Chriſt;
and by this miracle converted many of the Jews, who dwelt at 35.
Lydda, and in the vale of Saron.

Another miracle alſo, which he performed at that time, had 36. 37. 38.
a great effect in converting the Jews of thoſe parts. 39. 40. 41. 42.

A pious, and very charitable woman at Joppa, of the name of Tabitha, being dead, the diſciples there ſent two of their body to Peter at Lydda, to deſire him to come to them. Peter immediately went; and was carried into an upper chamber; where he found the corpſe laid out for burial; and a number of poor widows ſtanding

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26. This was the journey, which Paul mentions Gal. i. 18.

34. The word στρωσον does not properly ſignify *make thy bed:* but *make ready thy room for thy gueſts.* The ſame word is uſed in that ſenſe, Mark xiv. 15, and Luke xxii. 12.——The caſe ſeems to be this. Peter was in Eneas's houſe, with other gueſts, as was not uncommon in the houſes of ſick people, when only *confined*; as in this paralytic caſe. To ſhew therefore the greatneſs of the cure, Peter bad Eneas ariſe, and himſelf make his room ready for his gueſts.

35. Lydda was a celebrated town in Judea, in which were many ſchools; and where the Sanhedrim ſometimes met.—The vale of Saron, or Sharon, was remarkable for the many villages that were ſcattered about it, and for it's rich paſturage. See 1 Chron. xxvii. 29.

36. Joppa was a ſea-port, on the Mediterranean, not far from Lydda.

round it, lamenting their loſs; and ſhewing their ſeveral garments, which the holy woman had given them.

Peter removing them from the chamber, that their lamentations might not interrupt his prayers, kneeled down, and prayed fervently to God. He then aroſe, and calling her by her name, her life returned; and ſhe was preſented by the apoſtle to her friends in perfect health.

43. After this, Peter continued at Joppa ſome time longer; during which the divine Providence brought about one of the greateſt events of the chriſtian church.

CHAP. X.

1. 2. It happened, that ſome Roman troops were at this time ſtationed at Cæſarea. To this garriſon belonged a centurion of the name of Cornelius; a man of eminent piety, and charity; which
3. 4. 5. 6. through his example, were diffuſed through his family. This perſon being favoured by an angelic viſion, importing the acceptance of his good works in the ſight of God; was ordered to ſend to Joppa for the apoſtle Peter, who ſhould inſtruct him
7. 8. in a ſtill purer faith, than he had yet received: in obedience to which viſion Cornelius immediately ſent proper perſons on this errand.

9. 10. In the mean time it pleaſed God, as this was the firſt inſtance of Gentile converſion, to allay the prejudices, which Peter might have on that ſubject, in the following manner.

The apoſtle having been at prayer, and being afterwards hungry,
11. 12. while food was preparing for him, fell into a trance, and ſaw a

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2. The expreſſion φοβουμενος τον θεον commonly ſignifies a perſon, who acknowledged, and worſhipped the true God; but did not pay obedience to the law. He was called a proſelyte of the gate by ſome: while others allow no ſuch perſon; but ſuppoſe the Jews divided mankind merely into Jews, and Gentiles. See the queſtion diſcuſſed in Dr. Lardner's evangel. writers, chap. xviii.

large

large ſheet, held by the four corners, full of different kinds of animals, clean, and unclean, deſcending towards him. As he ſtood 13.
beholding it, a voice from heaven bad him take, and uſe what he choſe, without diſtinction. Peter offended at the idea, ſaid, 14.
He had never been accuſtomed to eat any thing unclean. The 15.
voice anſwered, What God hath cleanſed, that call not thou unclean. This was repeated three ſeveral times. 16.

While Peter was heſitating, and doubting in himſelf, what might 17. 18. 19.
be the meaning of this viſion, he had a ſecret intimation from the Holy Spirit, that three perſons, who then waited for him, ſhould explain the intention of what he had ſeen; and was ordered to 20.
accompany them without objection.

Peter immediately going down, found the meſſengers from 21.
Cornelius; and aſking the cauſe of their coming to him, was 22.
informed of the ſeveral circumſtances of the viſion, which Cornelius had ſeen. Peter kept them with him that night; and the 23.
next day ſet out with them to Cæſarea, attended by ſome of the brethren from Joppa.

The next morning, they arrived at Cæſarea; where they found 24.
Cornelius, with a company of his friends, expecting them.

When Peter's arrival was known, Cornelius went out to meet 25.
him, and fell down at his feet. But Peter raiſing him, gently 26.
rebuked him for giving that honour to a man, which was due only to God.

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16. A thing's being done three times has generally been conſidered, both among ſacred, and prophane authors, as a ſign of earneſtneſs, and certainty. Thus St. Paul ſays, *I beſought the Lord thrice*; and thus Virgil,

——Terque ipſa ſolo, mirabile dictu,
Emicuit———— ————

25. Many interpreters ſuppoſe, that Cornelius took Peter for an angel: but his having been the ſubject of an angel's miſſion was certainly ground enough for Cornelius to conſider him as a perſon of high dignity. The Romans never uſed proſtration to any human being.

Peter

27. Peter then entering the houſe, and ſeeing ſo numerous a company
28. aſſembled; made his apology as a Jew, for this familiar intercourſe with Gentiles; ſaying that God had inſtructed him to make no
29. diſtinction between them, and the Jews. He then inquired into the reaſon, why Cornelius had ſent for him.

30. 31. 32. Cornelius related the particulars of his viſion; which Peter com-
33. 34. paring with what he himſelf had ſeen, ſaid, He was now fully convinced, that God made no diſtinction, among the ſeveral nations
35. of the world; but was ready to admit all religious people of every
36. denomination, as well as the Jews, to the privileges of the goſpel. He then ſet before them the great object of a chriſtian's faith.—Jeſus Chriſt, ſent by God to be the Saviour of the world—
37. who, after John the Baptiſt had prepared his way by preach-
38. ing repentance had, under the influence of the Holy Spirit,
39. 40. 41. wrought many miracles to eſtabliſh the faith of mankind in his doctrine. Of theſe great events, and of his death, and glorious reſurrection, Peter told them, he, and the reſt of the apoſtles, were witneſſes, choſen by God. They had been converſant with
42. 43. Jeſus, both before, and after his reſurrection; and were appointed to publiſh to mankind, remiſſion of ſins, through faith and repentance—to inform the world, that Jeſus will be the judge of

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41. The expreſſion, *not unto all the people, but unto choſen witneſſes*, has given great offence to free-thinkers. Why not unto *all the people?* Why not make this event as public as poſſible?——God Almighty might have many reaſons. One or two even human prudence may ſuggeſt. Suppoſe Chriſt had ſhewn himſelf formally to the chief prieſts, and they had attempted again, as they probably would, to ſeize him: he muſt by a miracle have eſcaped out of their hands. And might not this have given occaſion to their ſaying, that the reſurrection alſo was a mere *illuſion?*—Suppoſe again, his enemies, who *had ſeen* him, ſhould have denied it (as they appear to have been capable of anything) would not this have made their evidence, if appealed to, worſe, than their giving no evidence at all?—Beſides, all the people *might* have ſeen him, *if they had pleaſed:* all that is meant is, that the apoſtles only were the *appointed, choſen* witneſſes. Five hundred, we know, at one time, did ſee him together. 1. Cor. xv. 6.

quick,

quick, and dead—and to open, and unfold all the prophecies, which bear teſtimony to the great truths concerning him.

While Peter was thus ſpeaking, it pleaſed God, on this ſolemn occaſion of the firſt Gentile converſion, to pour out on all, who were preſent, the gift of the Holy Ghoſt; with it's miraculous accompaniment of ſpeaking languages. 44. 45. 46.

This exceedingly aſtoniſhed the Jewiſh Chriſtians, who came with Peter. That apoſtle however conceiving the gift of the Holy Ghoſt to be a ſufficient evidence of the faith of theſe converts, ordered them immediately to be baptized.——After this, Peter continued, at the requeſt of theſe new diſciples, ſome days longer at Cæſarea. 47. 48.

CHAP. XI.

In the mean time, the account of what had happened at Cæſarea, being brought to Jeruſalem, gave much offence to the Jewiſh Chriſtians, who thought the privileges of the law had been invaded; inſomuch, that when Peter returned to Jeruſalem, he found the matter very ill-underſtood; and many of the diſciples diſpoſed to find fault with his behaviour. 1. 2. 3.

On this he gave them a plain relation of the whole affair from the beginning—of the viſion which *he* had ſeen—of the viſion, which *Cornelius* had ſeen—of his viſit to that pious centurion; and of the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt. He then put them in mind of what Jeſus himſelf had ſaid, that *John indeed baptized with water; but that they ſhould be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt*; and concluded with ſaying, that as God had thought proper to give his ſanction to the reality of the converſion; it would ſurely have been highly improper in him, to have been backward in receiving theſe converts by baptiſm into the communion of the church. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17.

This relation of the affair had its full effect; and the whole aſſembly united in praiſing God for making the Gentiles partakers with them of the benefits of the goſpel. 18.

While

19. 20. 21. While these things were doing at Cæsarea, the gospel began to extend in another quarter, as far as Antioch, and the country in it's neighbourhood. Here it was preached by some of the disciples, who had fled from Jerusalem, on the persecution, which had followed Stephen's death; and being accompanied by miracles, had great success. It was now preached both to Jews, and Gentiles.

22. The apostles at Jerusalem being informed of the disposition of Antioch to receive the gospel, immediately sent Barnabas thither;
23. who found great cause for rejoicing; and exhorted the new con-
24. verts to continue steadily in the faith they had professed. Barnabas was a man of a mild, and amiable disposition; and being aided by the gifts, and graces of the Holy Spirit, he won greatly upon
25. the people; and brought a large addition to the church. But thinking there was still occasion for more assistance, he went to
26. Tarsus for Saul; and returned with him to Antioch. Here these two apostles continued a full year; and formed a very considerable church; the members of which were first known by the name of Christians.

27. 28. About the end of the year, a disciple of the name of Agabus, coming with some other disciples from Jerusalem, declared at An-

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19. Ελληνιστας in some copies is Ελληνας; and indeed there seems to be a distinction between the Grecians mentioned ver. 20, and the Jews mentioned ver. 19. See a note on Acts vi. 1.

26. The word χρηματιζω properly signifies obtaining *a name* from *a calling*; of which kind of names we have many in England, as *Smith*, *Miller*, *Carpenter*, &c. One would imagine the name of Christian was first given in contempt; both because the people of Antioch were said to be of a scurrilous, jesting humour; and because Tacitus, when he mentions Christians, expresses himself under this idea, *vulgus christianos appellat*.—The word apostle is not always strictly confined to the twelve. Barnabas is called an apostle. Acts xiv. 14.

28. Οικουμενην, in the original, is supposed by some to signify the Roman empire; but it is most commonly confined in this passage to Judea. Josephus speaks of a famine in *Judea* at this time, but mentions no other place; and indeed if it had raged in Syria, the Christians there, could not have been so well able to send relief to their brethren in *Judea*.

tioch,

tioch, in the ſpirit of prophecy, that there ſhould ſoon be a great famine through Judea, which accordingly came to paſs. On this the church of Antioch made a collection for their brethren there; and ſent it to Jeruſalem by the hands of Barnabas, and Saul. 29.

CHAP. XII.

While the affairs of the church were in this proſperous ſituation at Cæſarea, and Antioch, Herod Agrippa, with a view to pleaſe the Sanhedrim, began a ſevere perſecution againſt the chriſtians at Jeruſalem. He firſt put James, the ſon of Zebedee, to death; and ſoon after apprehending Peter, threw him into priſon; with a view to execute him alſo, after the enſuing paſſover. 1. 2. 3. 4.

For the deliverance of this great apoſtle, the church made conſtant prayers to God; which it pleaſed the Almighty to anſwer. 5. 6. For as Peter, the very night before Herod intended to put him to death, was ſleeping between two ſoldiers, who guarded him; an angel appeared in heavenly brightneſs, and awaking him, bad him riſe. 7. His chains immediately falling from his hands, he threw his mantle about him, and followed the angel; 8. ſcarce knowing, whether he were yet awake. 9. Under this divine conduct, he paſſed ſecurely through all the guards; 10. and came to the large iron-gate, which led into the city. This opened of its own accord; and as they were now in the ſtreet, the angel left him.——Peter come intirely to himſelf; 11. and conceiving fully the gracious deliverance

1. This Herod was the grandſon of Herod the great; and is repreſented by Joſephus, as a pious prince, greatly obſervant of the ceremonies of the Jewiſh religion. If this was the caſe, he was probably led by his Jewiſh prejudices to perſecute chriſtianity.

2. The early martyrdom of St. James, was no doubt an inſtructive leſſon to the apoſtolic college, by ſhewing them, that the miraculous powers, with which they were endowed, could not ſecure them from the malice of their enemies.

4. Four quaternions of ſoldiers were ſixteen; four of whom watched by turns.

6. To whom he was chained, according to the Roman cuſtom.

12. he had received, went to the houſe of a religious woman of the name of Mary, the mother of Mark, where many pious chriſtians
13. were then aſſembled at prayer.——On Peter's knocking, a young
14. woman went to the gate; but inſtead of opening it, on knowing his
15. voice, ſhe ran with joy to inform the family; but they paying little
16. regard to her at firſt, were above meaſure aſtoniſhed, on finding
17. it was really Peter himſelf.——The apoſtle then related to them the circumſtances of his great deliverance; and deſiring them to inform his brethren; retired himſelf to a place of ſecurity.

18. 19. In the morning there was great confuſion among the ſoldiers; and tho Herod, on examining the caſe could find no circumſtances of neglect, he ordered the whole guard to be put to death.

20. But that wicked prince knew not how ſoon his own end was approaching. From Judea he went to Cæſarea; where the Ty-
21. rians, fearing his diſpleaſure, had ſent ambaſſadors to pacify him. On a ſet day he gave audience to them; and being magnificently
22. arrayed, he made a ſolemn oration; which was received, as if

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13. It was common among the Jews, to give the names of plants, and flowers, to their female children. Rhoda ſignifies a roſe; Tamar, a palm; Edeſſa, a myrtle; Suſannah, a lily. Sometimes they would give the names of animals alſo: as Tabitha, and Dorcas, ſignify in Hebrew, and Greek, a goat, or roe.

15. The text ſays, they ſuppoſed it was ο αγγελος αυτου. Some imagine they meant, what we call in Engliſh, his *ghoſt*: others, his *guardian angel*: others only a *meſſenger*, from him.

17. It is James the leſs, who is mentioned here: James, the ſon of Zebedee, had been put to death.

20. *Becauſe their country, was nouriſhed by the king's country.* The Tyrians, who were intirely a trading people, neglected agriculture; and received their chief ſupplies of corn from Judea.

22. We have the ſame account from Joſephus; with many other circumſtances; but none that differ materially from theſe. Antiq. lib. XIX. ch. viii. What the apoſtle calls *royal apparel*, Joſephus tells us, was a robe of ſilver tiſſue, moſt curiouſly wrought; on which the rays of the ſun ſhining, as he ſat on his throne, exalted above the people, gave him a moſt ſplendid, and dazling appearance.

it

it had come from a God. For his pride, cruelty, and other 23.
ſins, he was ſtruck by the hand of the Almighty with a terrible
diſeaſe, which put an end to his life.——The goſpel however 24.
was only the more confirmed by the oppoſition he had given
it. 25.

CHAP. XIII. 1.

In the mean time Barnabas, and Saul, having delivered the
contributions, which had been intruſted to them from Antioch,
returned thither again; where they found the chriſtian church
conſiderably increaſed.——Beſides theſe two great apoſtles, three
others of ſingular eminence preſided over it, at that time; Simeon,
who was ſurnamed Niger; and Lucius of Cyrene; and Manaen,
who had been the friend of Herod, but having left his connections
with that prince, had embraced the chriſtian religion.

Saul, and Barnabas had not been long at Antioch; before they 2. 3.
were ordered by the particular deſignation of the Holy Spirit to
leave that city, and preach the goſpel in other parts; and a ſolemn
day of faſting, and prayer was appointed to ſupplicate God for
their ſucceſs. Under the guidance of the Holy Ghoſt, therefore 4. 5.
they went to Seleucia, taking Mark with them, as their aſſiſtant.
From Seleucia they ſailed to Cyprus; and beginning at Salamis,
they preached the goſpel in the Jewiſh ſynagogues through the
whole iſland as far as Paphos.

At Paphos reſided the Roman proconſul, Sergius Paulus, a 6. 7. 8.
well-diſpoſed man; who hearing of the two apoſtles, ſent for

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23. Put an end to his life—or as it is expreſſed in the figurative language of ſcripture; *The angel of the Lord ſmote him, becauſe he gave not God the glory.* The pride of heart which made him aſſume divine powers to himſelf, was the *particular* crime here laid to his charge: but he was probably a wicked prince in many other reſpects, notwithſtanding the account of Joſephus.

them, and desired them to give him some account of the new religion they taught.

In the family of the proconsul lived a Jewish magian, of the name of Elymas; who being jealous of the apostles, endeavoured to prevent the proconsul's paying any attention to them. On this,
9. Saul, (who took also the name of Paul) turning to him with
10. 11. that dignity, which the Holy Spirit inspired, rebuked his subtil and mischievous opposition to a doctrine, the purity, and evidence of which he could not but acknowledge. He then told him, that as he had voluntarily suffered his understanding to be thus darkened, God would punish him, for a time at least, with the loss of his eyes. On this a darkness fell immediately on him; and he discovered by stretching out his hands, and seeking for somebody to
12. lead him, that he was utterly deprived of sight. The proconsul, impressed with the doctrine of Paul, and struck with this great miracle; immediately professed himself a christian.

13. The two apostles soon after, leaving Paphos, went to Perga, in
14. Pamphylia; where Mark left them; chusing rather to go to Jerusalem.—From Perga they continued their journey to Antioch in
15. Pisidia. Here they went to the synagogue on the sabbath-day; and after the reading of the law, and the prophets, being asked by the rulers of the synagogue, if they had any thing to say to the people;
16. Paul desired their attention with the motion of his hand; and addressing himself to the Jews in particular; and to all in general,

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9. Some writers think the apostle took the name of Paul, in compliment to Sergius Paulus, his first Gentile convert. Others suppose, that it was only the name he was generally known by, among the Greeks, and Romans; as John in England, is Jean in France, and Hans in Holland.

13. The reason of Mark's leaving Paul, at this time, is no where given. It is certain, that Paul was much offended at it. See Acts xv. 38.

14. To distinguish it from *Antioch in Syria*, from whence they had come.

15. The rulers of the synagogue were authorized to allow whom they pleased, to preach.

who

who believed in the true God, he took occaſion from the ſacred 17. 18. 19.
books, which had juſt been read to them, to recapitulate in few 20. 21. 22. 23.
words, the Jewiſh hiſtory, in order to deduce the Meſſiah from
David, according to God's conſtant promiſes to that prince; re- 24.
minding them, at the ſame time, of the miraculous manner, in
which Chriſt had been introduced by John the baptiſt; whoſe 25.
teſtimony of Jeſus's dignity, and of his own inferiority, was equally 26.
full.—The apoſtle then recommended earneſtly to their ſerious
attention, the gracious offer of ſalvation through the goſpel. He
mentioned the circumſtances of Jeſus's death; and ſhewed, that all 27. 28. 29.
the malice of his enemies againſt him, was only a direct completion
of the predictions of the prophets. He adverted next to his glorious 30.
reſurrection; which was proved by many of his followers, who 31.
ſaw him alive, and attended him through a courſe of ſeveral days.— 32. 33.
Thus, ſaid he, we have opened to you thoſe gracious promiſes
made to our fathers, which he hath now fulfilled in ſending
Jeſus Chriſt into the world: *Thou art my Son, this day have I* 34 35.
begotten thee.—And as to that great event, his reſurrection from
the dead, now no more to return to corruption, *I will give you*, ſaid
God, *the ſure mercies of David: thou ſhalt not ſuffer thine holy One to
ſee corruption.* This prophecy, he told them, alluded to the reſur-
rection of the Meſſiah. Of David no prophecy of this kind could 36.
be ſpoken. He ſaw corruption; and ſo did every one, except 37.
Jeſus, who had been raiſed from the dead. They all died again,
and ſaw corruption.——Paul having thus proved Jeſus to be the 38.
Meſſiah; proceeded to point out his *office*. He came, ſaid he, to
offer remiſſion of ſins to man through faith, and repentance; and 39.

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33. Moſt interpreters conſider the *raiſing up* of Jeſus in this verſe as ſpoken of his *re-
ſurrection*: but the context, and application of the prophecy rather give the ſenſe of Chriſt's
being raiſed from the ſeed of David. See Pſ. ii. 7—Iſa. lv. 3—Pſ. xvi. 10.

to

to make that effectual atonement for him, which the expiatory
40. 41. ſacrifices of the law could not make.——Laſtly, the apoſtle warned his audience not to be found in the number of thoſe, whom the prophet threatened with deſtruction, if they refuſed this gracious offer; and rejected a diſpenſation ſo clearly proved, as this certainly was.

42. 43. After the apoſtle had ended his diſcourſe (which had been heard with great attention) the ſynagogue broke up; and many of the Gentiles, as they left the place, deſired to hear the ſame diſcourſe on the next ſabbath: while Paul earneſtly exhorted ſeveral of the Jews, and proſelyte-Gentiles, who had been convinced by what they had heard, and profeſſed themſelves chriſtians, to continue ſtedfaſt in the faith.

44. On the next ſabbath day, almoſt the whole city met together, to
45. attend the apoſtle. But the unbelieving Jews, of whom there were many in thoſe parts, being jealous of this popularity, had now drawn together a party; and mixing with the audience, interrupted Paul's diſcourſe, and turned the whole city into a ſcene of confuſion.

46. 47. The apoſtle, with great plainneſs, told them, that it was neceſſary for the goſpel firſt to be preached to them; but as they had hardened themſelves againſt it, it ſhould now, according to the predictions
48. of the prophets, be offered to the Gentiles.——When the Gentiles heard this, they glorified God; and as many, as were well-diſpoſed,

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41. The prophecy, to which St. Paul alludes, is contained in Heb. i. 5. where the prophet threatens the people with the Babyloniſh captivity. St. Paul's *immediate* reference ſeems to be to the deſtruction of Jeruſalem by the Romans; but he ſeems alſo, like our Saviour, to refer to the next life.

47. The prophecy, to which St. Paul particularly refers, is Iſa. xlix. 6.

48. The word τασσω in the original, may well ſignify *diſpoſed*, or *prepared for*; but the tranſlators of our Engliſh teſtament, give many words a predeſtinarian ſenſe, which there is no reaſon for.

believed

believed the gospel; which began now to spread through all the 49.
country.

This success still further enraged the Jews; who stirring up all 50.
whom they could influence, raised such an opposition against Paul, and Barnabas, as obliged them to leave the place. Giving up therefore these infidel Jews to the judgment of God by the ceremony of 51.
shaking off the dust of their feet against them†, they bore the persecution they had received with holy joy; and retired to Iconium.——God did not however desert the church, which had 52.
thus planted in Pisidia; but watched over it, and replenished it with his Holy Spirit.

At Iconium the apostles preached in the synagogue; and had, at CHAP. XIV.
first, great success. They performed many miracles also in testimony 1. 2. 3.
of their doctrine; and numbers both of Jews, and Greeks professed the faith.

But here also the unbelieving Jews followed the example of those 4.
in Pisidia; and made it their business to form a party against the progress of the gospel. Afterwards gaining the magistrates on their 5.
side, they laid a scheme to seize the two apostles, and put them to 6. 7.
death. But they being aware of the design, fled to Lystra, a city of Lycaonia; and preached the gospel sometimes there; and sometimes at Derbe, and other places, in that neighbourhood.

It fell out, as Paul was preaching at the former of these towns, 8. 9.
that a person, who had been lame from his birth, was among his hearers; and the apostle perceiving he had faith to be healed, bad 10.
him stand upright on his feet; on which he became instantly 11.
sound.——When the inhabitants of Lystra saw this, they ran about

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† See a note on Matt. x. 14.

11. It was very agreeable to the heathen creed, that the Gods should visit the lower world. Even Tully tells us, the Gods must have a human form, as they never appeared in any other. De Nat. Deorum.

the

12. the city, crying out, that the Gods were come down among them; calling Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercury, becauſe they ob-
13. ſerved he was the principal ſpeaker. Nay to ſuch a height did their zealous phrenzy carry them, that the prieſt of Jupiter began to make preparations for a ſolemn ſacrifice to them.

14. When the two apoſtles, Paul, and Barnabas, heard this, they rent their oloaths, and ran in among the people, crying out;
15. "What mean you by this? We are men like yourſelves: and are "ſo far from ſuffering any devotion to be paid to us, that it is the "great end of our doctrine to call men from the worſhip of falſe "Gods, and teach them to acknowledge one only God, who made
16. "heaven, and earth, and all things therein; and who amidſt all
17. "the blindneſs, that hath overſpread the world, hath always given "ſufficient evidence of his divine nature, in the works of creation, "to recall mankind from the abſurdity of worſhipping idols."——
18. Even with this language they were ſcarce able to repreſs the zeal of the people.

19. This popular favour however ſoon took another turn. The unbelieving Jews from Piſidia, and Iconium, coming hither alſo, infuſed their ſpirit into the inhabitants of Lyſtra; and a tumult being raiſed, Paul was ſeized, and carried out of the city; where he was
20. ſtoned, and left as dead. By the aſſiſtance however of his friends he revived; and retired, the next day, with Barnabas to Derbe.

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13. *Jupiter, which was before their city:* that is, whoſe ſtatue ſtood at the entrance of their city.—*Brought oxen and garlands unto the gates:* that is, brought oxen crowned with garlands.

Victima labe carens, et præſtantiſſima formâ
Siſtitur ante aras, vittis inſignis, et auro.
Ovid's Met.

20. Some interpret this as a miraculous reſurrection from the dead. I think it rather appears otherwiſe, from the concluſion of the 19th verſe, *ſuppoſing he had been dead.*

Here

Here too the apoſtles preached the goſpel, and converted many 21.
to the chriſtian faith. They afterwards returned to Lyſtra, and
Iconium, and Antioch in Piſidia; where they confirmed the converts 22.
they had made; and exhorted them to continue ſtedfaſt in the faith;
notwithſtanding thoſe perſecutions, which (they ſaw) had ariſen,
and muſt neceſſarily ariſe again.——Then, after ſolemn prayer, and 23.
faſting, ordaining elders to preſide over the ſeveral churches; and 24.
recommending them to the grace of God, they paſſed through 25.
Piſidia, and Pamphilia; and continuing ſome time at Perga, they 26.
went to Attalia; and from that city by ſea to Antioch in Syria,
from whence, about two years before, they had ſet out.

On their arrival there, they called an aſſembly of the church; 27.
and gave them an account of God's gracious dealings through their
miniſtry; and ſhewed them, that a door was now fully opened for
the goſpel among the Gentiles.—After this circuit through different 28.
parts of Aſia minor, they continued ſometime with the diſciples at
Antioch.

CHAP. XV.

The firſt thing that diſturbed the peace of the church of Antioch,
was an opinion introduced by certain judaizing chriſtians from
Jeruſalem, with regard to circumciſion; which they thought all 1.
chriſtians were *obliged* to receive.——This opinion was oppoſed 2.
by Paul, and Barnabas, with great warmth. But when it was
found they could not ſuppreſs it by their own authority; it was
determined, that thoſe two apoſtles, with ſome others, ſhould
conſult the church at Jeruſalem. In their way thither, through 3.
Phœnicia, and Samaria, they occaſioned great joy among all chriſ-
tians by the accounts they gave of the converſion of the Gentiles.

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23. Theſe elders ſeem to be conſidered next in dignity to the apoſtles. Their office appears to be deſcribed Acts xx. 28.

4. When they arrived at Jeruſalem, they acquainted the apoſtles,
5. and elders, with all the tranſactions of the church at Antioch: and then informed them of the diſſention which had been introduced by
6. ſome judaizing chriſtians, of the ſect of the Phariſees, with regard to circumciſion, and other points of the law of Moſes. This queſtion the apoſtles, and elders, reſolved to examine in a full aſſembly; which they accordingly called.

7. As in this aſſembly there were many chriſtians, who were ſtrenuous upholders of the law of Moſes, the queſtion was agitated with ſome warmth on both ſides.—The great advocate for the full liberty of the chriſtian converts, was Peter. He put the aſſembly in mind of the caſe of Cornelius; of whom circumciſion
8. 9. had not been required. He dwelt on the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt on ſeveral Gentile converts; which was argument ſufficient, that God had fully accepted them without circumciſion; alledging that their hearts were purified, not by the ceremonies of the law, but
10. by faith alone. Why therefore, ſaid he, do you go about to put a yoke on the necks of the Gentile-chriſtians, which neither we,
11. nor our fathers were able to bear? We believe that we as Jews cannot be ſaved, but through the goſpel; why ſhould we then make the Gentiles conſider the law as ſufficient, which in our own caſe we acknowledge to be ineffectual?

12. Peter's ſpeech was ſeconded by Paul, and Barnabas, who informed the aſſembly, that God's dealings with ſuch of the Gen-

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4. This ſeems to be that journey to Jeruſalem of which Paul ſpeaks Gal. ii. 1.

4. There ſhould only be a comma, or ſemicolon after this verſe, as it is plain the 5th verſe is a continuation of what the two apoſtles from Antioch related.

10. Some interpreters leave Θεον out of this ſentence; as it is not found in ſome of the beſt MSS; and tends only to embarraſs the ſenſe. The expreſſion then is, *Why do you attempt, or endeavour to put, &c.* – Πειραζω however in this ſenſe, is not often, I believe, uſed with an accuſative.

tiles,

tiles, as they had converted, were exactly ſimilar to the account, which Peter had juſt given them.

When they had all ſpoken their ſentiments, James ſtood up, 13. 14.
and ſaid; "Peter hath juſt explained to you the circumſtances, which attended the firſt converſion of the Gentiles—a converſion
directed by the immediate interpoſition of God. And if you ex- 15. 16. 17.
amine the prophets you will find them all ſpeaking the ſame language. No mention is made of the covenant of circumciſion; but that the defection of the houſe of Iſrael ſhould be reſtored by calling in all the nations of the earth to worſhip God in
holineſs, and righteouſneſs of life. From the beginning, no doubt, 18.
God reſpected all things; and would certainly have enjoined circumciſion, if it had been neceſſary. I ſee no reaſon therefore to 19.
make the Gentiles conform to it.——And yet it may be proper 20.
to enjoin them to abſtain from ſome things, which give great offence to the Jews; as the rites, and pollutions of heathen temples—fornication—and the uſe of blood: and this prohibition 21.
ſhould be the more general, as there are few towns, where there are any chriſtian-converts, in which the Jewiſh religion is not exerciſed."†

This

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13. 19. James ſays, *Men and brethren hearken unto me—my ſentence is.* It is well Peter did not ſay this; it had been a good argument for the ſupremacy of the Pope.

17. The text quoted here is Amos ix. 11, 12. I have given what appears to me the ſenſe of it; and what agrees with the apoſtle's argument. But we do not find this text with any exactneſs in our vulgar tranſlation of the bible. The apoſtle has evidently quoted from the LXX; which differs a little from our tranſlation; but agrees exactly with the apoſtle.

† This whole paſſage is acknowledged, on all hands, to be a difficult one.

The firſt queſtion, that ariſes, is, whether the prohibition of blood, is meant as a *general*, or as an *occaſional* precept? Many things have been ſaid with much force on both ſides of the queſtion. I know no writer, who has drawn up the arguments for its being a precept of *general obſervation*, in ſtronger array, than Mr. Stackhouſe: yet ſtill, I think, the mind revolts from this idea, when we conſider the liberal principles of the chriſtian religion—ſo little

 affected

22. 23. This opinion of James being agreeable to the whole aſſembly, they reſolved to ſend two perſons of great eminence from their own body, Judas, and Silas, together with Paul, and Barnabas,

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affected by outward obſervances—and ſo wholly delighting in inward purity——when we conſider what a number of particular paſſages there are in ſcripture, which mention the heart only as the receptacle of virtue and vice—when we reflect, that St. Paul tells us, we may eat any thing ſet before us, aſking no queſtions for conſcience ſake – and when we conſider laſtly, that the prohibition of eating blood, is not ſeconded by one ſingle text of a ſimilar kind, throughout the whole new teſtament. If it had been meant as a general precept, we might certainly have expected to ſee it confirmed by other paſſages; or, at leaſt, ſecured againſt miſtake in thoſe paſſages, which ſeem ſo directly to oppoſe it.

But ſtill if we allow the precept to have been *occaſional* only, how comes it, that this occaſional precept is joined with *fornication?* Is this alſo an occaſional precept? By no means: we are ſufficiently guarded againſt ſuch a miſconſtruction by repeated paſſages in ſcripture. So that here we are not left in doubt.

But why then is a *precept of moral obligation* thus claſſed among *indifferent things?*—Becauſe it was conſidered in that light by thoſe heathen converts, to whom the decree was ſent. Nay, by many of them, we know well, that fornication was conſidered as a part of religious worſhip; and is therefore commonly joined with idolatry; as in 1 Cor. x. 7. Eph. v. 5. 1 Cor. v. 11. Rev. ii. 14, 20. Wiſd. of Sol. xiv. 25, &c. 2 Mac. vi. 4. Some to get rid of the difficulty, for πορνειας read χοιρειας, to abſtain from *ſwine's fleſh*; but this, I believe, reſts on no authority.

The laſt difficulty of this paſſage relates to the 21ſt verſe; *For Moſes, in old time, hath in every city, them that preach him; being read in the ſynagogues every ſabbath day.*—Some explain this paſſage, as if the apoſtle had ſaid, *We need not mention theſe things to the Jews, becauſe, as they conſtantly read the books of Moſes, they are perfectly acquainted with them.* But this ſeems to have nothing to do with the *intention of the decree*; which is ſo far from endeavouring to rectify the opinions of the Jews, that it is not even addreſſed to them. It is addreſſed only to *them which from among the Gentiles were turned to God.* The intention therefore of this paſſage ſeems to be, as I have endeavoured to explain it, that wherever the Jews, and Chriſtians were found together, this decree ſhould be carried, and preſented to the Gentiles; in order to prevent that offence, which might otherwiſe be given to the Jews.

One thing more, with regard to this text, may be obſerved; which is, that the words και τῳ πνικτῳ are omitted in many MSS; and univerſally unknown to the Latin fathers, who leave them intirely out in all their quotations. And indeed the words ſeem of no uſe in the text; for the only reaſon for abſtaining from *things ſtrangled*, is, that the blood might not be eaten with the fleſh.

to

to the church of Antioch, with the apoſtolic decree, which was written in theſe words.

"Foraſmuch as we have heard, that certain perſons of our 24.
aſſembly going over to you, have, without any authority from us, pretended to lay you under an injunction to be circumciſed, and to obſerve the Moſaic law——it hath ſeemed good to us aſſembled 25. 26. 27.
in council, to ſend Judas, and Silas, together with our beloved Paul, and Barnabas, who have hazarded their lives for the goſpel, to inform you, that, agreeably to the ſenſe of the Holy Spirit, 28. 29.
we think proper to lay nothing upon you, but theſe things—to abſtain from eating meat offered to idols—from fornication—and from blood: from which if you keep yourſelves, you will avoid giving offence. Fare you well."

This decree being read to the church of Antioch, occaſioned 30. 31. 32.
great joy; to which Judas, and Silas contributed not a little; confirming by their own private exhortations, the authority of the church of Jeruſalem.——Some time after, Judas returned again 33. 34. 35.
into Judea; but Silas choſe to ſtay longer at Antioch; where Paul

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28. *It ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt, and to us*—that is, *it was agreeable to the ſenſe of the Holy Spirit*, as declared in the caſe of Cornelius, &c.—that the Gentiles need not be circumciſed in order to become Chriſtians. The council does not ſeem to aſſert, that the Holy Ghoſt *immediately directed this decree*. If it had, there would have been no occaſion for any reaſoning about the matter.——*Theſe neceſſary things*, ſays the text. In ſome copies we have a different reading; which may be rendered, *theſe things which are, at this time, neceſſary*.

29. It is worth while to compare the mildneſs of the concluſion of this decree, *(from which if you keep yourſelves, ye ſhall do well. Fare ye well;)* with the anathemas which uſed commonly to conclude the decrees of popes, and councils.

32. Judas, and Silas are here called *prophets*. The word προφητης ſometimes ſignifies a perſon, *who ſpeaks for another*; as a teacher in an aſſembly, may be called a prophet; or, as Aaron was called Moſes's prophet. It is not clear in what ſenſe Judas, and Silas are here called *prophets*: but it ſeems rather probable, that they are called ſo, as ſpeaking the ſenſe of the church at Jeruſalem.

alſo,

alſo, and Barnabas continued, with many others; all uniting in the great work of preaching the goſpel.

36. Paul having now been a conſiderable time at Antioch, propoſed to Barnabas, to make another circuit among the ſeveral churches,
37. which they had eſtabliſhed. Barnabas cloſing with the propoſal, mentioned Mark, as a proper perſon to take with them; which Paul
38. would by no means conſent to, as he had left them ſo abruptly at
39. Pamphilia. This drew on ſo ſharp a contention between theſe two apoſtles, that they ſeparated. Barnabas taking Mark, who was his
40. 41. nephew†, embarked for Cyprus; while Paul accompanied by Silas, and attended by the prayers of the church, took the circuit he had propoſed, through Syria, and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

CHAP. XVI. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. At Lyſtra he found a young convert of eminent piety, of the name of Timothy: and thinking him a proper perſon to be the companion of his labours, he complied ſo far with the prejudices of the Jews in thoſe parts, as to circumciſe him; for they all knew, that his

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38. See chap. xiii. 13.

39. Here is an eminent example of imperfection in theſe great apoſtles. Mark had probably been much to blame in leaving Paul; and Paul perhaps now as much in reſenting it ſo ſtrongly: and both he, and Barnabas, in making a formal quarrel. They diſcovered plainly, as they had told the people of Lyſtra, that *they were men of like paſſions with themſelves*. Paul however was afterwards perfectly reconciled to Mark: and ſpeaks of him, as one of his great comforts in his labours. See Col. iv. 11.

† See Col. iv. 10.

3. Tho it is evident enough, that Paul did not circumciſe Timothy from any religious principle, but merely in compliance with the prejudices of the Jews; yet it muſt be owned, there was ſomething rather ſingular in his doing it juſt at that critical time, when he himſelf was carrying a decree againſt circumciſion. The fact ſeems to be, that circumciſion was generally allowed to Jews. Timothy was circumciſed, becauſe his mother was of Jewiſh extraction: but the ſame apoſtle who allowed this, forbad Titus to conform to this ceremony, becauſe he was a Greek. Indeed none of the apoſtles ſeem to have had any objection to circumciſion in *itſelf:* but only as it was impoſed under the idea of being *neceſſary to ſalvation*.

4. It is a good obſervation of L'Enfant that the word δογμα, which is here tranſlated a *decree*, always ſignifies ſomething temporary, and ceremonial; and not of perpetual obligation.

father

father was a Greek; tho his mother was a Jewiſh chriſtian.— Having added this young convert to his company, Paul proceeded to the ſeveral cities, which he meant to viſit: and removed their ſcruples; by giving them copies of the decree, which the apoſtolic aſſembly had made at Jeruſalem.

Having paſſed through ſeveral parts of Aſia, where the goſpel had already been planted, he determined to go into ſome other provinces, where it had not yet been preached: but in this deſign he was over-ruled by the influence of the Holy Spirit, and went to Troas.——Here he was directed by a viſion from heaven, to viſit Macedonia; and accordingly he, and his companions, of whom Luke was one, took the neareſt way to Philippi, the chief city of that part of the country. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12.

At Philippi the Jews were allowed a place of worſhip at a little diſtance from the city, near the ſide of a river. Here therefore Paul reſorted on the ſabbath day; and found chiefly religious women; among whom one Lydia, a Jewiſh proſelyte, a dealer in purple, being convinced by Paul's arguments, was baptized with all her family; and intreated him, and his company to lodge at her houſe. 13. 14. 15.

There was at that time, at Philippi, a young woman, poſſeſſed with an evil ſpirit, who afforded gain, by her divinations, to ſome people, who employed her. This demoniac followed Paul, and his 16. 17.

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6. 7. It does not abſolutely appear from the text, that the goſpel had not been preached in Aſia, and Bithinia: but it ſeems probable, the people of thoſe countries might not be yet prepared for the goſpel; or there might be other reaſons, why Macedonia was at this time preferable.

10. In this verſe St. Luke firſt alludes to himſelf. But of whatever uſe he might be in theſe journeys to the chriſtian cauſe, he paſſes all over in modeſt ſilence.

13. Dr. Lardner ſhews, that it was very uſual for the Jews, in foreign countries to have houſes of prayer allowed by the ſides of rivers, or on the ſea-ſhore. See his Credib. part I. ch. III.

17. The demoniacs, during the life of our bleſſed Saviour, always acknowledged his power—on what principle we are unacquainted—perhaps through flattery.

companions, as they went to the ſynagogue, crying out, Theſe are the ſervants of the moſt high God, who ſhew us the way of
18. ſalvation. On this Paul, ordering the evil ſpirit to leave her, ſhe was perfectly reſtored.

19. 20. 21. Her employers thus finding the hopes of all further gain diſappointed, ſeized Paul, and Silas, and dragging them before the magiſtrates, accuſed them of diſturbing the peace of the city; and of introducing new rites, and cuſtoms, which were contrary to thoſe
22. 23. 24. already eſtabliſhed. The tumult increaſing, the magiſtrates ordered them to be ſcourged, and thrown into priſon; with a ſtrict command
25. to the jailor, to keep them ſafely.——But at midnight, as Paul,
26. and Silas were ſinging praiſes to God, an earthquake ſuddenly ſhook the foundations of the priſon; and burſt open all the gates.—
27. The keeper awakened by the noiſe, and finding all laid open, took it for granted that the priſoners were fled; and drawing his
28. ſword, was going to kill himſelf: when Paul, ſeeing his frantic action, with a loud voice cried out, Do yourſelf no harm; we are
29. all here. On this the keeper calling for a light, was ſtruck with the compoſure of Paul, and Silas, in the midſt of this terrible convulſion; and comparing the greatneſs of their behaviour, with the miracle of the demoniac, he was convinced of their divine
30. power; and falling down before them, he brought them into his
31. 32. houſe, and aſked them with great emotion, What he ſhould do to be ſaved? The apoſtle, in few words, explained to him the terms of the goſpel; and held out to him, a belief in Jeſus Chriſt.——
33. 34. The keeper then waſhing their ſtripes, and refreſhing them, received baptiſm himſelf, with his whole family; who all joined in praiſing God for his gracious mercies to them.

35. The next day the magiſtrates, ſomewhat aſhamed of their haſty proceedings, ſent privately to the keeper of the priſon, to diſmiſs
36. the two men, who had been committed to his charge. This meſſage the keeper, with much joy, imparted to the apoſtles. But Paul, with

with great ſpirit, anſwered, they were Roman citizens; and had 37.
been uſed in a manner, in which no Roman citizen ought to be
uſed. What? ſaid he, ſhall they beat, and impriſon us uncon-
demned; and then privately diſmiſs us? Let them come themſelves,
and make an apology for what they have done.——The magiſtrates 38.
on hearing they were Roman citizens, were much alarmed; and 39.
coming to the priſon, intreated them quietly to leave the city.—
They ſtayed however ſome little time at the houſe of Lydia, com- 40.
forting their friends; and then leaving Philippi, went through CHAP. XVII.
Amphipolis, and Apollonia, to Theſſalonica, the principal city of
Macedonia. 1.

At Theſſalonica alſo the Jews were allowed a ſynagogue; in 2. 3.
which Paul, during three ſabbath-days, explained the principles of
the chriſtian religion; proving from the prophecies of the old
teſtament, that, that Jeſus, whom he preached, muſt needs both
have ſuffered, and have riſen from the dead. This doctrine had 4.
ſuch effect, that a great multitude of the proſelyte Greeks; and many
of the Jews alſo believed.

But the ſucceſs of the apoſtles ſoon raiſed a party of unbelieving 5.
Jews againſt them; who getting together a number of diſorderly
people, attacked the houſe of Jaſon, where they lodged; and not
being able to find the apoſtles, who had eſcaped, they carried 6. 7.
Jaſon, and ſome other chriſtians, whom they met with, before
the magiſtrates, and informed them of the great irregularities, which
theſe people had committed in other places, as well as at Theſſa-
lonica; ſetting up, as they ſaid, in oppoſition to the Roman au-
thority, a certain king of the name of Jeſus. They then laid an
information againſt Jaſon for harbouring ſuch ſeditious perſons. 8.
This violent charge put the magiſtrates under ſome difficulty.
They ſaw the frivolouſneſs of it: at the ſame time they could
not intirely neglect it. So they took ſecurity of Jaſon, and of the
others, and diſmiſſed them.

10. Paul, and Silas, in the mean time, had been ſent privately to Berea; where with the ſame freedom, which they had uſed at Theſſalonica, they went into the Jewiſh ſynagogue, and preached.
11. Here the Jews were much better diſpoſed, than at Theſſalonica: for they were at the pains of ſearching the ſcriptures, and com-
12. paring them with the doctrines, which Paul preached. Many of them after this examination, believed; and many Greeks likewiſe of both ſexes.

13. But when the unbelieving Jews of Theſſalonica had heard of the ready acceptance, which the Bereans had given to the goſpel,
14. 15. they came to Berea, and excited the people there againſt the apoſtles. As Paul was the moſt obnoxious perſon, he thought it prudent to avoid their fury; and going to the ſea-ſide, as if he had intended to embark; he turned ſhort, and went to Athens; ſending orders to Silas, and Timothy to follow him there.

16. While Paul waited at Athens for his companions, he was grieved to ſee a city, ſo celebrated for learning, addicted, in ſo groſs a
17. manner, to idolatry. He took every opportunity therefore of reaſoning both with the Jews in their ſynagogues; and with the Athenians, whom he accidentally met in public places.——As
18. 19. 20. Athens was at that time, the ſchool of philoſophy, the apoſtle
21. began ſoon to excite attention; and ſome Epicurean, and Stoic philoſophers, partly in contempt, and partly through curioſity (for the Athenians were a very inquiſitive people) brought him into their public aſſemblies, and deſired to know, what that new, and

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13. The word σαλευω, which is tranſlated *ſtirred up*, expreſſes properly that kind of agitated motion, which is given to the ſea in a ſtorm; and admirably deſcribes the raging of a popular tumult.

16. Petronius, who lived about the time of St. Paul, ſays, that at Athens, *Facilius poſſis Deum, quam hominem, invenire.*

21. This character is given of the Athenians both by Demoſthenes, and Thucidides.

uncommonly

uncommonly ſtrange doctrine was, which he had advanced? alluding to what Paul had ſaid, with regard to the reſurrection.

On this opening, Paul began by telling them, how much he 22. 23.
thought them addicted to religion. Not content, ſaid he, with that variety of Gods you worſhip, I met with an altar inſcribed TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. This proves however that there is a God, whom you allow you do not know. That God I now 24.
preach unto you—the Creator of all things—the Lord of heaven and earth—who is not confined to human temples—nor in want 25.
of ſacrifice, or any thing, which human power can ſupply; inſomuch as every thing derives its exiſtence, and preſervation from him. This great God is the common father of all mankind; 26.
whoſe ſeveral nations he hath diſtributed over the face of the earth, according to his own good pleaſure; and hath required them all 27.
to acknowledge, and worſhip him, from a juſt ſenſe of their 28.
dependence on him, for every bleſſing they enjoy—their life; their breath; and very exiſtence. The apoſtle then quoted a paſſage

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22. Dr. Lardner contends, and I think with great juſtice, that δεισιδαιμονεστερους ſhould be taken in a good ſenſe, and not rendered *ſuperſtitious*. (See Credib. vol. I. p. 193 in a note). St. Paul ſhewed, at all times, great delicacy towards the opinions of others; and plainly at this time, did not mean to give any offence to the Athenians.

23. Diogenes Laertius in his life of Epimenides (lib. I. page 29) tells us, that the Athenians, being afflicted with a peſtilence, invited Epimenides to luſtrate their city. The method he took, was to carry ſeveral ſheep to the Areopagus; from whence they were left to wander, as they pleaſed, under the obſervation of people ſent to attend them. As each ſheep lay down, it was ſacrificed, on the ſpot, *to the propitious God*. By this ceremony the city was relieved. But it was ſtill unknown, what God was propitious. An altar therefore was erected at every place, where a ſheep had been ſacrificed, *to the unknown God*.

23. With what great addreſs the apoſtle turns the ſuperſtition of the Athenians againſt themſelves!—He alſo makes an admirable apology for himſelf. He had been accuſed of ſetting forth ſtrange Gods—to which charge he anſwers, that he found among them an altar inſcribed *to the unknown God*.

28. Aratus was a Cilician poet; the countryman of Paul. Nearly the ſame expreſſion is found in Cleanthes's hymn to Jupiter. See Hen. Step. poeſ. philoſ. p. 49.

29. from Aratus, in which that poet calls mankind *the offspring of God.* If, continued he, we are the offspring of God, let us consider, in what light we are called so. It is in our minds, not in our bodies, that we resemble him. We must not therefore think that images of gold, and silver are any representations of the deity.——
30. Thus far however God hath born with the ignorance of mankind. But now he hath revealed his will to them explicitly; and com-
31. mands them every where to repent; and prepare themselves for that awful time, when he will call them all into judgment, before Jesus Christ, the redeemer of the world; of whose divine authority he gave sufficient evidence by raising him from the dead.

32. This discourse, especially the latter part of it, with regard to the resurrection of the dead, affected this assembly of philosophers in different ways. The Epicureans treated it with great contempt: while the Stoics thinking there was something plausible in the notion, desired they might hear the apostle on the same subject
33. 34. again——Before he left Athens however, he made many converts; among whom were some people of consequence; particularly Dionysius, one of the members of the council.

CHAP. XVIII.

1. 2. From Athens Paul went to Corinth: and finding there a christian Jew, of the name of Aquila, who had been driven from Rome,
3. with all his countrymen, by a decree of the emperor Claudius; he abode with him; and as Aquila, and he were both tent-
4. makers, they wrought together. On the sabbath-days Paul taught

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2. Suetonius tells us, in the life of Claudius, that, that Emperor, *Judæos, impulsore Christo, assiduè tumultuantes, Roma expulit.*

3. It may appear a little singular, that Paul, who was brought up in a learned profession, should be a tent-maker: but we must consider, that the Jews of all conditions taught their children some mechanic business. It was a common saying among them, *that he who taught his son no business, bred him a thief.*—The same custom still prevails in the east. Even the Grand Seignior himself is always taught some mechanic art. Sir Paul Ricaut tells us, that the Grand Seignior, to whom he went ambassador, had learned to make wooden spoons.

in

in the ſynagogue, applying himſelf chiefly to the Jews, and proſelytes.——Afterwards, when Silas, and Timothy joined him from 5.
Macedonia, they all united in the moſt earneſt application to the Jews; endeavouring to convince them from the prophets, that Jeſus was certainly the Meſſiah.——But their zealous endeavours 6.
were received with ſo hardened an oppoſition, that Paul finding it to no purpoſe to continue among them, gathered up his garment, and ſhaking it out, accompanied that ſignificant action by telling them, he now gave them up—they muſt take their guilt upon themſelves—he would turn to the Gentiles. And from this 7.
time he preached no more in the ſynagogue, but in the houſe of one Juſtus, who lived near it.——Notwithſtanding however 8.
this violent oppoſition from the Jews, Criſpus, the chief ruler of the ſynagogue, believed; and a great number of the Corinthians.

As Paul was now about to preach the goſpel to the Gentiles, and 9. 10.
muſt therefore expect to irritate the Jews ſtill more, it pleaſed God to give him the comfort of a heavenly viſion, in which he was ordered to continue where he was, amidſt a well diſpoſed people—to preach the truth boldly—and to truſt in the protection of heaven.—On the authority of this viſion Paul continued a year, and 11.
a half longer at Corinth, preaching the goſpel; and met with no oppoſition, till Gallio was appointed proconſul of Achaia; 12.
whom the Jews hoped to intereſt in their favour. With this view, they brought Paul before him in a tumultuary manner;

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6. It is rendered in our tranſlation, *he ſhook his raiment*; which implies a degree of paſſion, and violence, unbecoming the apoſtolical character. I have given it another interpretation, led by the word εκτινασσω, which literally ſignifies, to *ſhake from*, or *ſhake out of*. The action ſeems to be merely ſymbolical, and by no means paſſionate. The ſtory of the Roman ambaſſador, who *ſhook war from his gown*, will be remembered.

12. It is remarkable, that Gallio was the brother of the philoſopher Seneca; and is deſcribed by him as a man of the ſweeteſt diſpoſition. Statius mentions him alſo in the ſame amiable light.

accuſing

13. 14. accuſing him of introducing a new mode of worſhip. But Gallio immediately comprehending the whole affair, told the Jews plainly, that if it were a matter of right, and wrong, he would readily
15. enter into it: but as he ſaw it was a queſtion with regard to ceremonies, and points of religion, of which he was no judge; he gave them to underſtand, he ſhould never trouble himſelf about
16. ſuch matters; and ordered them immediately to leave the court.——
17. Imboldened by this, the Greeks, who favoured Paul, took Soſthenes, the ruler of the ſynagogue, who had been the chief mover in the affair, and beat him on the ſpot: while Gallio, thinking probably it was a puniſhment he well deſerved, took no notice of the impropriety of the action.

18. After this, Paul continued ſometime longer at Corinth; and then went into Syria, accompanied by Aquila, and his wife Priſcilla; having in his way, ſhaven his head at Cenchrea, as a teſtimony that he had finiſhed a vow, in which he had engaged.

19. 20. 21. At Epheſus he found a ſynagogue, where he preached; and was ſo well received by the Jews there, that he was much preſſed to ſtay longer: but he thought himſelf under a neceſſity to keep the enſuing feaſt at Jeruſalem. He left however Aquila, and Priſcilla

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17. They beat him perhaps not in the court room; but as he left it.—It is however rather doubtful, whether Soſthenes was not St. Paul's friend: ſee 1 Cor. i. 1. The relation is accompanied with ſo few circumſtances, that it is difficult to collect the real fact. There is a various reading which places οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι in the room of οἱ Ἕλληνες. If this ſhould be the true one, it gives a different ſenſe to the paſſage.

18. Some imagine this to have been a Nazarite vow; and yet it does not correſpond with the Levitical inſtitution, which required the Nazarite to *ſhave his head at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.* Num. vi. 8.——It is commonly thought to have been a vow for ſome ſignal deliverance.

19. Epheſus was the principal city of proconſular Aſia. It ſtood on the ſide of a hill, overlooking a beautiful and very extenſive plain, watered by the river Caiſter.

21. Not from any principle of conſcience; but probably becauſe he might meet at Jeruſalem a great concourſe of Jews, and many of his own converts.

with

with them, till his return; and then embarking at Ephesus, he 22.
landed at Cæsarea; and went to Jerusalem, where he had a conference with the apostles; and from thence went to Antioch in 23.
Syria.——There he spent some time; and then visited the several churches of Galatia, and Phrygia, exhorting the new converts to continue steadily in the faith they had professed.

After Paul had left Ephesus, an Alexandrian Jew arrived there, 24. 25. 26.
named Apollos, who had been a disciple of John the baptist. He was an eloquent man, well-versed in the Hebrew scriptures; and preached the gospel, from such knowledge as he had, with great earnestness. Aquila, and Priscilla having heard him, and finding him not fully informed in the doctrines of the gospel, instructed 27. 28.
him more perfectly. Afterwards, when he wished to preach the gospel in Achaia, the Ephesian church gave him letters of recommendation to the christians there. In all that country his services were very eminent; for his eloquence and knowledge in the scriptures, were such, that he greatly convinced the Jews, from the prophetic writings, that Jesus was the Messiah.

In the mean time Paul returned to Ephesus, as he had promised. CHAP. XIX.
Here he found some more of the disciples of John; and asked them, Whether they had received the Holy Ghost? To this they 1. 2.
answered, they had heard of nothing particular on that subject. He 3.
then asked them, Whether they had been baptized in the christian faith? and was informed, they had received no baptism, but that of John. Paul then told them, that John's baptism engaged men 4.
only to repentance, till the appearing of the Messiah; but on

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26. It is probable he was too much attached to judaism.

2. It is not to be supposed, they had never heard of the Holy Ghost, which their answer seems to imply; but having lived probably in some remote part, they had not heard of the late effusions, and gifts of the Holy Ghost. They knew only what John had occasionally said: see Mat. iii. 11—Mark i. 8—John i. 33.

that

that event it was expected, they ſhould immediately be baptized
5. into the chriſtian faith.——On this they were baptized in the name
6. of Jeſus Chriſt; and Paul laying his hands on them, they received
7. the Holy Ghoſt, with it's miraculous accompaniments of the ſpirit
of prophecy, and ſpeaking with tongues. The number of theſe
diſciples was about twelve.

8. Paul on his ſecond viſit to Epheſus, continued preaching freely
9. in the ſynagogue about three months. But the Jews raiſing a violent
party againſt him there, as they had done at Corinth; he ſeparated
himſelf, and his company, from them; and preached afterwards
10. in the ſchool of one Tyrannus. He continued however at Epheſus
about two years longer; and had wonderful ſucceſs, both among
11. the Aſiatic Jews, and the Gentiles; being enabled to perform
12. miracles in a very extraordinary manner. He not only cured diſeaſes
by ſpeaking a word: but on receiving garments from ſick, and
poſſeſſed people, he healed their ſeveral diſorders by returning them.

13. Theſe miracles greatly raiſed the envy of the Jewiſh exorciſts;
who ſeeing Paul perform them in the name of Jeſus, made an effort
14. to perform them in the ſame manner. Seven ſons particularly of
15. Sceva, one of the chief prieſts, made the attempt. But the poſſeſſed
man cried out, Jeſus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?
16. On this he made a furious attack upon them; and having terrified,
17. and wounded them, put them all to flight. This ſhewed the power
of the apoſtles over evil ſpirits ſo very eminently ſuperior to that of
18. 19. 20. the exorciſts, that it drew over great multitudes to adore the name
of Jeſus. Nay it had ſuch an effect upon people in general, that

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13. See note on Matt. xii. 26.

19. Books in general were more valuable before the invention of printing; and theſe, in particular, might be rendered more ſo by the many curious figures, and diagrams, which they might contain. If the pieces of ſilver were ſhekels at 2*s.* $4\frac{1}{4}$*d.* each, the value would be about £5900. If they were denarii, at $7\frac{3}{4}$*d.* each, the value would be about £1600.

numbers,

numbers, who had practiſed theſe magical, and pernicious arts, came to the apoſtles, confeſſed their wicked impoſtures; and bringing their miſchievous books, burnt them publicly; tho their value was very conſiderable.

Paul having thus ſettled a church at Epheſus, reſolved now, 21.
under the influence of the Spirit, to go through Macedonia, and
Achaia, to Jeruſalem; and from thence to Rome. He ſent Timo- 22.
thy therefore and Eraſtus before him into Macedonia to make ſome
proper diſpoſitions; and himſelf ſtaid a while longer at Epheſus.

During this interval a violent commotion was ſtirred up againſt 23.
him.——In that city lived a certain artizan, named Demetrius, 24. 25. 26. 27.
whoſe principal occupation it was to make ſilver ornaments, uſed
in the worſhip of Diana; by which many people were inriched.
This perſon calling together ſuch as wrought in the ſame
buſineſs, of whom there was a conſiderable body, reminded them
of the profit they had acquired by an employment now likely
to be at an end, if Paul's doctrine againſt image-worſhip ſhould be
univerſally received. Of this, he told them there was a great
likelihood from the attention that had been paid to it, not only in
that city, but in the greateſt part of Aſia. He bad them conſider
alſo, that not only their livelihood, but their religion itſelf was in
danger.——This language threw the whole body of artizans into 28.
a ferment; and nothing was heard from every part of the croud;
but voices crying out, Great is Diana of the Epheſians!

The day, on which Demetrius had contrived this tumult, was 29.
the great feſtival-day of the goddeſs, when games were celebrated to
her honour in the theatre. This ſet numbers of idle people at
liberty; who being violently inſtigated againſt Paul, and not finding

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24. Theſe *ſilver ſhrines* are ſuppoſed to have been ſmall temples, with the goddeſs in miniature, inſhrined; which the devotees of Diana uſed to ſet up, as private objects of worſhip, in their houſes. Some ſuppoſe them to have been medals.

him, ſeized Gaias, and Ariſtarchus, two Macedonian converts, who had been ſeen with him; and hurried them into the theatre; with a view probably, if they had been ſuffered, of throwing them
30. to the wild beaſts.——Paul, hearing of this violence, was very deſirous to enter the theatre, with an intention, if poſſible, to
31. aſſuage the people: but neither the diſciples, nor the principal magiſtrates, who were his friends, would ſuffer him.

32. In the mean time the tumult increaſed; and numbers had now joined it, who did not even know the cauſe of the diſturbance;
33. ſome crying one thing, and ſome another.——At this period of the tumult, the Jewiſh inhabitants of Epheſus, finding the multitude ſo divided in their aim; and fearing leſt they too ſhould ſuffer with the chriſtians, drew Alexander through the croud, with a view, that he ſhould explain that matter to the people. He ſtood up therefore, and beckoning with his hand, would have addreſſed
34. them. But they finding he was a Jew, would not ſuffer him to ſpeak; drowning his voice, with one general cry, from every part of the aſſembly, Great is Diana of the Epheſians!

35. In this ſituation of things, one of the magiſtrates ruſhed into the aſſembly; and by his preſence reducing it a little to order, thus ſpoke.——"Is there any one, ſaid he, who is ignorant of the high veneration, in which this city holds the great goddeſs Diana;

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31. Theſe magiſtrates, in the original, are ſtyled Ασιαρχοι, *chief men of Aſia*; and it is from this expreſſion, that ſome have ſuppoſed the public games were now celebrating, which ſeems very probable; and that theſe Ασιαρχοι were deputies from the ſeveral cities of Aſia, who preſided over them.

33. I think the interpretation here given of this paſſage, is the moſt probable one. This Alexander was perhaps the ſame mentioned 2 Tim. iv. 14. See a note there.

33. There cannot be a finer deſcription, in ſo few words, of a popular tumult, than St. Luke has given us here.

35. It is not well agreed what magiſtrate is meant here; but it is generally ſuppoſed he was the officer, who preſided in chief over the public games.

and

and her image, which is the undoubted offspring of Jupiter. As 36.
these things therefore are known to all the world, it is unnecessary
to defend them. Let me advise you, therefore, in this matter, to
do nothing rashly. These two men, whom you have dragged into 37.
the theatre, have neither been guilty of sacrilege, nor of blasphemy.
If Demetrius therefore, and the people of his company have any 38.
thing to alledge against them, let them carry the affair in a regular
way, before the proconsul; where it may be properly determined:
or if it relate to any matter not cognizable in the Roman courts, 39.
let it be determined in a lawful assembly: but as for this day's 40.
tumult, and uproar, for which no reason can be given, it is very
probable it may draw upon us the resentment of the Romans."——
This judicious speech had it's effect; and the tumult instantly 41.
subsided.

CHAP. XX.

Soon after, Paul calling the disciples together, took a formal
leave of them; and followed Timothy and Erastus, as he had in- 1.
tended, into Macedonia. Here he spent some time in exhorting 2.
the several churches; and then pursued his journey into Achaia;
where he continued three months. From hence he purposed to 3.
go by sea into Syria; but hearing, that the Jews intended to way-
lay him, he changed his design, and went by land through Mace-
donia.——In this journey into Asia, Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, 4. 5.
Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, and Trophimus, his companions,
went by sea; and waited for him at Troas: while he took ship 6.
at Philippi in Macedonia; and having crossed the Egean sea, came
to them; and continued a few days at Troas.

On the first day of the week before his departure, he assembled 7.
all the christians of those parts with a view to settle their opinions,

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7. The word διαλεγομαι, signifies sometimes to *dispute*, and *question*, as in Mark ix. 33, and Jude 9. It is more probable therefore that it has that meaning here, than that Paul should continue a set discourse during so many hours.

8. 9. and anſwer any objections, they might make. Their meeting was in an upper room, where many lights were burning; and as Paul had prejudices of different kinds to remove, he continued the aſſembly to a late hour. In the mean time, a young man of the name of Eutychus, being not much intereſted in what paſſed, fell aſleep on a window; and dropped down, on the outſide of the houſe,
10. to the ground; where he was taken up dead. But Paul immediately going down, raiſed him again to life; and preſented him to his
11. friends in perfect health. This was not only a great joy to all, who were immediately connected with him; but was a preſent
12. miracle to confirm the faith of ſuch as wavered.——As daylight came on, Paul adminiſtred the holy ſacrament to all the aſſembly;
13. and then, taking his leave, proceeded on his journey by land to
14. 15. Aſſos; where his companions met him by ſea. There embarking, he ſailed paſt the iſlands of Mytelene, Chios, and Samos, and landing at Trogillium, continued his courſe the next day to Miletus;
16. which is a few miles ſouth of Epheſus. He would not however

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8. It is ſuppoſed by ſome interpreters, that as theſe nocturnal meetings were become matter of objection to chriſtians, Paul choſe to have the room well lighted; that people might ſee from the ſtreet what paſſed. No other reaſon can well be ſuggeſted for our being told, *there were many lights burning*.

12. It is not well determined, whether a common meal is here meant, or the celebration of the euchariſt; the ſame phraſe being often uſed for both. Conſidering the ſolemnity of the occaſion, commentators are inclined to the latter interpretation: eſpecially as the meeting is introduced with that idea in the 7th verſe, where we are told *the diſciples came together to break bread*.—Juſtin Martyr, who wrote only about forty years after St. John's death, ſpeaking of the manner of celebrating ſunday among the chriſtians of his day, ſays, "that on ſunday the chriſtians both of the city and country meet together, becauſe that is the day of our Lord's reſurrection. The writings of the prophets and apoſtles are firſt read to us. Then the miniſter exhorts us to imitate what we have heard. We join next in prayer; and laſtly receive the ſacrament; when they, who are able, give alms." Apol. II. p. 98.

Pliny's account of the chriſtian ſabbath, written a few years before, is nearly the ſame. "They aſſemble, ſays he, ſpeaking of chriſtians, on a ſet day, before it is light; and bind themſelves by a ſacrament to do nothing bad." Lib. X. ep. 97.

visit that city, as he feared he might be delayed, and was desirous of keeping the feast of pentecost at Jerusalem. But as he might 17.
not have another opportunity of visiting the Ephesian church, he sent for the elders of it, to meet him at Miletus.

Here he reminded them of the laborious life he had led, ever 18. 19.
since his first coming to Ephesus; and of the many difficulties, and dangers, he had incountered among the Jews. He reminded 20.
them also, of the faithful discharge of his ministry both publicly, and privately—the subject of which had ever been, that repentance, 21.
and faith, were the only means of salvation, both to Jew and Gentile.—And now, said he, I am under the direction of the Spirit, 22.
on my journey to Jerusalem; not knowing what it may please God to lay upon me: only this I know, that dangers, and difficulties, in some shape, await me.—But these are not the things, 23. 24.
which give me pain; if I can only finish my course with joy; and the ministry, which God hath intrusted to me.——Of this however I am persuaded, that you shall see my face no more. I 25.
take the present opportunity therefore of testifying to you, that 26. 27.
if any man swerve from the truth; I am blameless—I have opened to you the whole counsel of God.——Be you equally attentive, 28.
both to your own behaviour, and to the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood; and which the Holy Ghost hath committed to your care.——Many enemies, after my departure, will rise up against it. Many enemies, even among yourselves, shall arise, to seduce you from the truth. Be therefore on your guard; and remember the various cautions, which, during three years, I have given you on this head.—With these instructions I recommend you to the grace of God; which, with your own 29. 30. 31. 32.

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25. The word ὁδὸς often signifies only *belief*.

28. This very remarkable expression, *the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood*, I think cannot easily be evaded by those, who deny the divinity of Christ.

sincere

33. ſincere endeavours, will perfect you in all holineſs.—For myſelf,
you will bear me witneſs, that I have not preached the goſpel
34. among you through any intereſted motives. You all know that
theſe hands have miniſtred, not only to my own neceſſities; but
35. to thoſe of others: and thus alſo I have inſtructed my fellow-
labourers; always remembering the words of our Lord, *that it is*
36. *more bleſſed to give, than to receive.*——After Paul had made this
37. 38. affectionate addreſs, they all joined with him in prayer; and then
accompanied him to the ſhip with many tears, and ſorrowful
embraces; grieving above all things, at his ſaying, they ſhould
CHAP. XXI. ſee his face again no more.

1. Having thus parted with the elders of the church of Epheſus,
Paul, and his company embarked again; and holding their courſe
along the iſlands of Cos, and Rhodes, they landed at Patara, on
2. 3. the ſouth of Aſia Minor. Here they found a ſhip bound to Phe-
4. nicia; in which they took their paſſage to Tyre.——At this city,
they met with ſeveral diſciples; who under the influence of the
5. 6. Spirit, deſired them not to go to Jeruſalem. But Paul, perſiſting
in his reſolution, they followed him, with their wives, and children,
a mournful company, to the ſhore; where, after prayer, Paul and
7. his friends embarked; and continued their courſe to Ptolemais.——
8. Here ſpending a day with the diſciples of that place; they pro-
ceeded to Cæſarea; where they lodged with Philip, one of the
9. ſeven deacons. This holy man had four unmarried daughters;
whom God had endowed with the ſpirit of prophecy.

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35. Theſe words of our bleſſed Saviour are not recorded by any of the evangeliſts; but as, without doubt, St. Paul had them on good authority, they muſt be conſidered as making a part of the evangelical hiſtory.—The giver is *ſuppoſed* here, to have *a good motive* in giving; on which the bleſſedneſs of giving depends.

7. Ptolemais took afterwards, in Turkiſh times, the name of Acra; and was the object of great contention during the holy wars. It is now, Maundrel tells us, a heap of ruins.

8. We are told Acts viii. 40, that Philip lived at Cæſarea.

While

While they continued here, the prophet Agabus came from 10.
Judea; and taking Paul's girdle, he tied it about his own feet and 11.
hands, and ſaid, Thus ſaith the Spirit of God; the Jews at
Jeruſalem ſhall in this manner treat the man, to whom this girdle
belongeth; and ſhall deliver him to the Gentiles.——This gave both 12. 13.
Paul's companions, and the diſciples at Cæſarea great uneaſineſs.
But notwithſtanding all their intreaty, Paul held his reſolution,
ſaying, What mean you to weep, and to break mine heart. I am
ready not only to be bound, but to die alſo for the ſake of the
goſpel.——When they found it was in vain to perſiſt, they ſub- 14.
mitted, ſaying, The will of the Lord be done!—Paul therefore 15. 16.
ſet out for Jeruſalem, accompanied by ſome of the diſciples of
Cæſarea; together with one Mnaſon, a Cyprian, who had a houſe
at Jeruſalem, where it was intended he ſhould lodge.

On their arrival at Jeruſalem he and his company were kindly 17.
received by the brethren, and the next day Paul went to James, and 18.
the reſt of the apoſtles; and gave them a full account of his 19.
miniſtry among the Gentiles. On this they all glorified God. 20.

On their part, they informed him of the ſtate of the goſpel at
that time at Jeruſalem—that it had increaſed exceedingly: but that
the zealous Jews, who had embraced it, could not be induced to
give up the neceſſity of obſerving the Moſaic law. They told him 21.
farther, that it was believed by all the Jewiſh chriſtians at Jeruſalem,
that nobody had more oppoſed the retaining of the Jewiſh ceremonies
among

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10. The ſame who foretold the famine. Acts xi. 28.

15. Our *carriages*, ſhould be tranſlated our *baggage*. It is uſed in that ſenſe in Xenophon's anabaſis—Επει πριστησαν συσκευσαμενοι επορευντο. Oxf. edit. p. 314. The word frequently occurs in Xenophon.

21. This paſſage plainly ſhews, that one of the chief ſubjects of St. Paul's diſcourſes to the Jews, was the inſufficiency of the Moſaic law in obtaining ſalvation. This was the doctrine, which had chiefly irritated the Jews againſt him; and had induced the apoſtolical college to conſult his ſafety by adviſing him to conform to the ceremonies of the Nazarite-vow.

22. 23. 24. among the Gentiles, than he had done. Something therefore, they thought, of a conciliatory nature was neceſſary. They proceeded to inform him, there was at that time, among them four perſons, who were then under a Nazarite-vow, which was to expire in ſeven days; and propoſed to Paul, that he himſelf ſhould take the ſame vow upon him for the ſame term; and be at the expence of proper ſacrifices, and ſhave his head; by which compliance, in an indifferent matter, he might convince the Jews, that their prejudices
25. againſt him were ill-grounded. Nor could this at all affect the Gentiles, as the late decree at Jeruſalem had made them entirely eaſy.
26. This advice Paul followed; and the next day, preſented himſelf in the temple; ſignifying his intention, after the accompliſhment of the ſeven days, to offer the ſacrifices, which the law required.—

As the *inefficacy* of the Jewiſh law therefore, particularly of circumciſion, and it's other rites, were ſo much the ſubjects of his preaching; we may conclude alſo they were equally the ſubjects of his writings; and that many paſſages in his epiſtles, which ſeem to ſpeak of *faith* in oppoſition to *works*, muſt be explained by this key. St. Paul might have preached, as much as he had pleaſed, about *faith, and works*, as that doctrine is ſometimes explained, and would have given no offence at all to the Jews. As therefore the apoſtle's doctrine about faith and works did give great offence to the Jews; we conclude it could not be a doctrine, which was no way calculated to offend them; but rather a doctrine, which we know, from the firſt, had always given them offence.

24. There is ſomething very beautiful, and exemplary, in the behaviour of theſe great apoſtles on this occaſion. No rigour appears in trifling matters; but a deſire in all things lawful to accommodate themſelves to the prejudices of others.—It is plain from this paſſage, among many of the ſame kind, that the apoſtles had no ſcruples of conſcience in conforming to the Jewiſh rites. All they contended for, was, that they were not neceſſary to ſalvation.

24. It was reckoned among the Jews, very meritorious to contribute to the expences of thoſe, who had taken a Nazarite vow. Joſephus tells us, that Herod Agrippa gained great credit by paying the expences of Nazarites; and Maimonides aſſerts, that he who did it, partook of the merits of the vow.

25. The decree mentioned Acts xv.

26. It is not obvious why Paul ſhould offer ſacrifices; inaſmuch as by reſpecting the type, he ſhewed diſreſpect to the archetype. All ſacrifices, it is true, did not imply propitiation. But this evidently did. See Numb. vi. 14.

But

But before the ſeven days were compleated, ſome of the Aſiatic Jews, who had perſecuted him in their own country, ſeeing him now in the temple, excited the people with violent outcries, againſt him, as a man, who had prophaned the law, and polluted the temple, by bringing uncircumciſed Greeks into it.——This laſt charge was founded on a groundleſs ſuppoſition, that he had carried Trophimus, an Epheſian, into the temple; whereas Paul, and he had only been ſeen together in the city. 27. 28. 29.

At theſe outcries great numbers of people flocking together, were ſoon actuated by the ſpirit of their leaders. Paul was immediately aſſaulted, and dragged out of the temple; and the enraged multitude would have put him inſtantly to death, if the Roman officer, who commanded in the caſtle of Antonia, had not iſſued out with a guard, and reſcued him. Lyſias, for that was the officer's name, having ordered Paul to be ſecured, demanded what they had to ſay againſt him? Not being able however to obtain any ſatisfactory anſwer from the confuſed clamours of the multitude, he commanded him to be carried up to the caſtle. But the croud was ſo violent, and daring, that the ſoldiers were ſcarce able to carry him up the the ſtairs. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36.

In this ſituation Paul addreſſing himſelf to the Roman officer, deſired to ſpeak a few words to him. Lyſias ſurprized at his 37.

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32. Joſephus deſcribes this caſtle, as having four towers, from one of which it overlooked the temple; and was therefore a great check upon it: for the ſoldiers could deſcend by a flight of ſtairs, on any alarm, into the portico of the temple, with which the caſtle was connected.

33. *Bound with two chains.* A capital offender among the Romans, was ſecured by being faſtened to two ſoldiers. See the ſame manner of ſecuring mentioned Acts xii. 6. For ſmall offences the priſoner was ſecured by a ſingle ſoldier. See Acts xxviii. 16.

ſpeaking the Greek language, aſked him, If he was not that
38. Egyptian, who, a few years before, had headed a band of four
39. thouſand ruffians? Paul aſſured him, he was not; but that he was
a Jew of Tarſus in Cilicia; and begged he might be permitted to
40. ſpeak to the people. The Roman officer giving him leave, Paul
CHAP. XXII. ſtood on the ſtairs of the caſtle; and having by waving his hand,
1. 2. obtained ſilence, addreſſed them in the Hebrew tongue, which ſtill
the more engaged their attention.

3. He began his defence by aſſuring them he was a Jew; and tho
a native of Tarſus in Cilicia, had been educated in Jeruſalem,
under their celebrated rabbi Gamaliel; by whom he had been fully
inſtructed in the law, of which he had been as zealous a defender
4. as any of them.——Nay, in the early part of his life, he had been
the moſt determined adverſary of that goſpel, which he now pro-
5. feſſed—and to this the high-prieſt, and elders could bear witneſs,
who had often employed him in perſecuting chriſtianity. He then
laid before them the ſingular, and miraculous event of his con-
verſion; and entering into the circumſtances of it, related in order,
6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. his journey to Damaſcus—the divine viſion, which had been vouch-
ſafed to him—the blindneſs, with which he had been ſtruck—and
his reſtoration to ſight at Damaſcus—mentioning the name of the

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38. Joſephus gives the following account of this Egyptian—that he got together a tumultuary army; whom he perſuaded, to believe, that he would miraculouſly take Jeruſalem, as Jericho had formerly been taken. With this view he led them to the Mount of Olives. But here they were attacked, and defeated by Felix, the Roman governor; who killed, and took about ſix hundred of them; and put the reſt to flight. Among the fugitives was the Egyptian himſelf, who not being afterwards heard of, was now ſuppoſed by Lyſias, to have made another attempt. Joſephus gives an account of this Egyptian both in his Jewiſh war, and in his antiquities, with ſome variation of circumſtances; which Lardner (Credib. Vol. I. p. 414) endeavours to reconcile; and makes both them and St. Luke accord.—Lyſias's conceiving Paul to be this Egyptian gives a ſtrong idea of the tumult.

3. *At the feet of Gamaliel*, ſays the text. This is not figurative; but relates to the manner, in which ſcholars ſet under the deſks of their maſters.

perſon

perſon there, who was inſtrumental in this wonderful recovery.—
He then told them that this was not the only miraculous call he 17.
had had. In Jeruſalem he had a revelation from heaven; by 18.
which he was forbidden to ſtay any longer there, as the Jews
would not receive his teſtimony. To this divine injunction he 19. 20.
ventured to reply, that the Jews could not doubt the truth, and
ſincerity of his converſion, from his former ſeverity to chriſtians;
and particularly in the caſe of Stephen; which would make him,
he thought, a properer perſon, than any other, to convert thoſe,
who lived on the ſpot, and were acquainted with all theſe cir- 21.
cumſtances.——But he was ordered by the heavenly voice to leave
Jeruſalem; and preach the goſpel among the Gentiles——

Thus far the people heard him patiently: but he had no ſooner 22. 23.
mentioned the Gentiles, than they broke out again into all the
exceſſes of rage, and violence; throwing off their cloaths, caſting
duſt into the air, and crying out, Away with him—Away with
him: it is not fit, that ſuch a fellow ſhould live.

The Roman officer, ſeeing the tumult renewed, and not being 24.
able to gather from a Hebrew-ſpeech, what Paul had ſaid, or done,
to excite ſuch violence, ordered him to be carried into the caſtle,
and to be examined with ſcourging. But as the ſoldiers were 25.
binding him, Paul aſked a centurion, who ſtood by, Whether it
were lawful to ſcourge a Roman citizen, yet uncondemned?—The 26.
centurion mentioning this to his commander, that officer aſked Paul, 27.
Whether the information he had received, were true, that he was 28.

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23. Throwing duſt into the air, is ſtill a mode of ſhewing contempt among the Arabians, particularly to criminals; as if they were fit only to be covered with earth.

28. Some learned critics have endeavoured to ſhew, that Tarſus never was among the Roman *municipia*. If ſo, Paul's *father* muſt have been a freedman, as many of the Jews were. But others ſay, Tarſus, which ſided with the two firſt Cæſars, obtained municipal privileges from one of theſe emperors.—Dr. Lardner quotes a paſſage from Dio to ſhew, that the chief-captain might eaſily have purchaſed his freedom; for at this time the citizenſhip of Rome was become very cheap. Meſſalina had introduced the ſale of it.

a Roman citizen? To this Paul anſwered in the affirmative. The officer ſtill doubting his aſſertion, aſked, in what manner he had obtained his freedom? It is not a matter, continued he, eaſily obtained: it coſt me a conſiderable ſum. But Paul informed him,
29. that he was free born.——This put an immediate ſtop to the ſummary way intended of examining Paul; and the Roman officer was not a little apprehenſive, on having gone ſo far. He reſolved
30. therefore to have him examined in another manner; and the next day ſent to inform the high-prieſt, and the council, that he would bring Paul down from the caſtle into the temple; where they might freely examine him; and ſet forth the ground of all this tumult.

CHAP. XXIII.

1. Paul being thus produced before them, looked round the council with ſome attention; that from a knowledge of the characters of the people, who compoſed it, he might be able to procure a party in his favour.——He then began with ſolemnly proteſting, that, however traduced he had been as a mover of ſedition, his opinions had always led him to a dutiful ſubmiſſion to law, and government——

2. The high-prieſt incenſed at this vindication of himſelf, ordered
3. thoſe, who ſtood by, to ſtrike him on the face: on which Paul, with ſome warmth, cried out, God ſhall ſmite you, for all your

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29. It is ſaid, he was afraid, *becauſe he had bound him*—that is, becauſe he had bound him in the ignominous manner, in which he had done, for ſcourging. A Roman citizen might be bound for ſecurity; and it appears from the 30th verſe, that Paul was ſtill in bonds.

1. *To a dutiful ſubmiſſion, &c.* As he had been accuſed of ſtirring up the people, this ſeems to be the moſt probable meaning of the paſſage.

3. The appellation of *whited wall* was probably in alluſion to our Saviour's calling the hypocritical Phariſees, *whited ſepulchres:* tho otherwiſe it was a very appoſite appellative, as the high-prieſt, at leaſt in exerciſing his functions, wore *a large white robe.*—This denunciation of God's wrath againſt this wicked high-prieſt, was fulfilled in the beginning of the Jewiſh war, about five years after. Joſephus informs us, that in a tumult having hid himſelf in an old aquaduct, he was diſcovered, dragged out, and put to death. Bell. Jud. lib. II. c. 17.

hypocritical

hypocritical pretences. Do you ſit here to judge me according to law, and command me to be ſmitten, contrary to law?

This ſpeech gave great offence to ſome of the bye-ſtanders; and 4. 5.
Paul thought it right to apologize for the impropriety of his behaviour; ſaying, he had not attended ſufficiently to what he ſaid; for the word of God enjoined him not to ſpeak diſreſpectfully of the ruler of the people.

This interruption being over, Paul began again; and having 6.
obſerved there were many Phariſees in the council, he ſaid, he knew well, that it was not for being a mover of ſedition, that he was called in queſtion; but for holding the opinion of the reſurrection of the dead, which as a Phariſee, and the ſon of a Phariſee, he had always maintained.

This immediately produced a diviſion in the aſſembly, which 7.
conſiſted of Phariſees, and Sadducees; the latter of whom denied 8.
the exiſtence of a future ſtate. While theſe therefore thought 9.
Paul ſhould be treated with every ſeverity; the Phariſees declared, they ſaw no fault in him: but if an angel from heaven had ſpoken to him in that wonderful account he had given of his converſion, they ſhould beware of doing any thing in oppoſition to God.——
By degrees the diſſention aroſe to ſuch a height, that the Roman 10.
officer fearing, leſt Paul might have been torn in pieces by the contending factions, ordered the guard immediately to carry him back to the caſtle.——That night the Lord favoured him with a 11.
heavenly viſion, exhorting him not to ſink under this perſecution; and informing him, that he was appointed to bear witneſs of the truth at Rome, as he had already done at Jeruſalem.

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5. Paul thought it right to apologize. *I wiſt not*, ſeems to mean, *I did not conſider*.—Or it may mean, he did not know him: for the high-prieſt might have been then in a common dreſs. He wore his pontifical robes only when he miniſtred in the temple; ſee Ezek. xliv. 19.

The

12. 13. The Jews now found that all their public meaſures againſt Paul, were ineffectual. Some of the more zealous of them therefore re-
ſolved on other means. About forty of theſe zealots binding them-
ſelves privately by an oath, that they would neither eat, nor drink,
14. till they had deſtroyed him, went to the chief prieſts; and in-
15. forming them of their conſpiracy, deſired them to requeſt the
commanding officer to bring down Paul again, the next day, to
be examined. In the mean time they would ſeize the opportunity,
as he came out of the caſtle, to fall upon him, and put him to
death.

16. This conſpiracy was diſcovered by a young man, a kinſman of
Paul's; who procuring admittance into the caſtle, opened the
17. whole affair to the apoſtle. On this Paul, calling a centurion,
deſired him to carry that young man to his commanding officer;
18. 19. 20. 21. to whom he had a ſecret to impart.——Lyſias taking the young
man aſide, heard all the particulars of the affair; and diſmiſſed
22. 23. him with a charge of ſecrecy. He then called two centurions,
and ordered them to have a body of horſe, and foot, ready to
24. march to Cæſarea, at nine that evening; and to provide beaſts,
25. to carry the priſoner Paul to Felix the proconſul; to whom he
wrote the following letter.

26. "Claudius Lyſias to the moſt excellent governor Felix, greet-
27. ing.——The perſon preſented to you with this letter, is a Roman
citizen; who having been the occaſion of a great tumult at Jeru-
ſalem; in which he was in danger of his life, was reſcued by me,
28. and conveyed to this caſtle. As I wiſhed to know what was
29. objected to him, I brought him before the high-prieſt, and his
council: but it appears to me, that the chief offence he has given,
is with regard to certain *religious opinions*, which he holds: for
30. nothing of a *criminal nature* has been laid to his charge. Finding
however, that the offence, of whatever kind, was likely to occa-
ſion

ſion great diſturbance here, I thought it right to remit the caſe to you; ordering the accuſing party alſo to attend. Farewell."

The centurion, receiving the letter, carried Paul that night to 31. 32. 33.
Antipatris; and the next day the foot returning, the horſemen conducted him to Cæſarea; where they delivered the letter into the hands of Felix, the proconſul; and at the ſame time preſented Paul.——Felix having read the letter, aſked to what province the 34.
priſoner belonged? And being informed, that he was a native of Tarſus, in Cilicia; he ordered him into confinement, till his 35.
accuſers ſhould arrive.

CHAP. XXV.

In leſs than a week the high-prieſt Ananias, and many of the council, with an eloquent man, one Tertullus, whom they employed, 1. 2. 3. 4.
arrived at Cæſarea, as Paul's accuſers; and the proconſul appointed a day of hearing.

Tertullus began his accuſation of Paul by paying the proconſul many compliments on the great happineſs, which the Jewiſh nation had long enjoyed under his government.——He then gave a brief 5.
account of the cauſe he had in hand; informing the proconſul, that the priſoner, who was a violent man, and a ringleader of the ſect of the Nazarenes, had been at the head of many ſeditions among the Jews, in different parts of the empire—and that at Jeruſalem, 6.
he had been guilty of an attempt to profane the temple—that they had had no intention of troubling the proconſul about this matter; but meant to have puniſhed the priſoner agreeably to their own law; 7. 8.
had not the tribune Lyſias, taken him violently out of their hands; and referred the matter to the proconſul's tribunal.——This charge 9.

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3. Theſe compliments were paid much at the expence of truth; for Joſephus, and Tacitus both inform us, how very corrupt a governor Felix was.

6. As the Jews could not put a criminal to death, tho they were impowered to inflict ſlighter puniſhments, the real meaning of what Tertullus ſaid, was, that they intended to have put him to death in a tumultuary manner, without any proceſs of law at all.

was

was ſupported by the high-prieſt, and his council; who all bore witneſs of the truth of what had been alledged.

10. The proconſul then giving Paul liberty to defend himſelf, he firſt expreſſed his ſatisfaction, that he had a cauſe to defend, before a judge, who had been for many years, acquainted with the laws,
11. and cuſtoms of the Jews—he then, in anſwer to the charge againſt him, gave a ſhort account of his whole conduct. He ſaid, that about twelve days ago he went up to Jeruſalem to keep the feaſt of
12. pentecoſt—but that he had neither diſputed in the temple, nor in the ſynagogue, nor in the city—nor had taken any one ſtep, which
13. had the leaſt tendency to raiſe a ſedition—that in ſhort, the whole charge againſt him was unſupported—and he might challenge them
14. to prove any ſingle *particular* of it.——With regard to his being a *ringleader of the Nazarenes*, he ſaid, he owned himſelf a chriſtian; and tho the Jews might call chriſtianity by the name of hereſy, it
15. was certainly the completion of their own law, and prophets; and held out the great articles of a reſurrection from the dead, and a ſtate
16. of rewards and puniſhments, which the generality of themſelves allowed. In a word, he ſaid, it was on the ground of this very perſuaſion, that he perſevered, both in the performance of his duty to God; and in an inoffenſive behaviour to man.——As to their laſt
17. 18. charge of his *prophaning the temple*, he ran over the particulars of his coming to Jeruſalem, to bring alms to the poor chriſtians

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14. Dr. Lardner lays great ſtreſs on the expreſſion, *ſo worſhip I the God of my fathers*, as making the chief point of Paul's defence. I ſhall lay the ſubſtance of what he ſays before the reader.

"By the Roman laws, no man might introduce or worſhip foreign Gods, not allowed by public authority. Yet chriſtians were protected by law, becauſe they worſhipped the God of heaven and earth—the God, whom the Jews worſhipped; and whoſe worſhip was every where eſtabliſhed. St. Paul's reaſoning therefore was this. They call chriſtianity a new ſect. Be it ſo: but in this way I worſhip the ſame God, which they do; and therefore am intitled to protection equally with them." Credib. p. I. b. I. ch. viii.

there

there—of his purifying himſelf peaceably in the temple—and of the violent attack that had been made upon him by the Aſiatic Jews; whoſe not appearing againſt him, he thought, was ground ſufficient 19.
to reject this charge. Of theſe tranſactions, he ſaid, the high-prieſt, 20.
and council of the Jews, who were *not preſent*, could be *no witneſſes*. They could be witneſſes only of what had paſſed in their own aſſembly; where, he believed, nothing offenſive could be produced 21.
againſt him; but his aſſerting the doctrine, he had juſt mentioned, of the reſurrection of the dead.

Felix having thus heard the accuſation, and defence; and knowing 22.
enough of the chriſtian religion to be well aſſured, there was nothing in its principles of ſeditious tendency, ſaw plainly how frivolous the accuſation was, and did not chuſe to paſs ſentence againſt Paul. On the other hand, being unwilling to diſpleaſe the Jewiſh council, he did not care to diſmiſs him. He therefore took a middle courſe, and told the Jews, he ſhould decide nothing in this affair, till the arrival of Lyſias, the tribune; whom he would examine with regard to the ſeveral circumſtances, which had been alledged.——In the mean time, he gave Paul into the cuſtody of 23.
a centurion, with orders to let him have his full liberty of going any where, and of ſeeing whom he pleaſed.

After this, Felix, for ſome time, left Cæſarea. On his re- 24.
turn he brought with him a Jewiſh lady, whoſe name was Druſilla: and whether through her curioſity, or his own, or ſome other motive, he ſent for Paul, and deſired to hear his account of the chriſtian faith. As Felix had been a great oppreſſor, and had now 25.

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21. As Paul's aſſerting the reſurrection of the dead had actually produced a tumult, (ſee chap. xxiii. 9, 10.) it is probable, he might mention it now, in his defence, as the only circumſtance, which could give colour to his being a raiſer of ſedition; tho it was clearly ſuch a circumſtance, as no judge could turn into crime.

25. The fact about Druſilla is mentioned by Joſephus. Hiſt. lib. XX.

been guilty of a very flagrant action in seducing Drusilla from her husband, Paul took this opportunity to awaken his conscience, by explaining the virtues of *justice*, and *temperance*; and inforcing what he said by the *terrors of a future judgment*. His discourse made such an impression on Felix, that he was thrown into great agitation by it; and abruptly dismissing the apostle, told him, he should hear
26. 27. him farther at a time of more leisure.—The impression however soon went off; and the mind of Felix, (as is usual in such cases) returned to it's former habits. He sent however frequently for Paul, after this—not to hear him discourse any more on religious subjects; but with a view to extort money from him for his release; and in this suspence he held him two years.—About the end of that time, Portius Festus was appointed proconsul, in the room of Felix; and Felix, with a view to ingratiate himself with the Jews, left Paul still in custody.

CHAP. XXV.

1. 2. 3. 4. In a few days after Festus had arrived in the province, he went to Jerusalem; where, among the first articles of business, he was informed by the high-priest, of the case of Paul; and was intreated to send for him to Jerusalem; and examine him there. But whether Festus had any intimation of their intending to lay in wait for him (which in fact they did intend) or he had some other reason, he shewed at first no inclination to indulge them; but let them know,
5. he should examine him at Cæsarea, where he himself was then going; and that the accusers of Paul might follow him thither.

6. 7. 8. Accordingly in about ten days, he went to Cæsarea, when Paul was brought before him—and the chief priests attended. The

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26. Felix knew the christians to be a numerous and very charitable body; and that it was common with them to raise contributions for the assistance of their brethren.

27. How much reason he had to ingratiate himself with them is very evident: for he was accused with great vehemence of mal-administration, when he left his province; and had certainly been ruined, if great interest with Nero had not interposed. See this proved by quotations in Lardner's Credib. part I. book I. chap. i.

accusation

accusation contained little more; and of course the defence, than in the former trial.

But by this time, a better understanding had commenced be- 9.
tween the chief priests, and their new governor; and Festus found it his interest to gratify the Jews with a new trial in their own courts at Jerusalem. However, as Paul was a Roman citizen, this could not legally be done without his own consent.——Paul 10. 11.
availed himself of his privilege; and knowing the inveteracy of his enemies, he rejected the idea of a Jewish court; and refused to be tried by any laws; but those of the empire. At the same time, considering the harsh treatment he had already met with at Cæsarea; where he had been in custody two years, for no offence; he stood upon his innocence, and appealed from a pro-
vincial tribunal, to that of Cæsar; and Festus, having advised 12.
with his officers, allowed the appeal.

Soon after this, Herod Agrippa, tetrarch of Galilee, and his 13.
sister Bernice, came to Cæsarea in compliment to Festus, on his arrival in the province; and Paul's cause becoming the subject 14.

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13. This Agrippa, son of that Herod Agrippa, who had put James to death, was king of Chalcis; a small district lying, as is supposed, between Libanus, and Antilibanus. The keeping of the temple of Jerusalem, with the holy garments, and the treasure, was committed to him by the emperor. In other respects he had little concern in Judea, which was under a Roman governor.—Bernice, his sister, is suspected to have lived criminally with her brother. Juvenal is supposed to allude to them in his sixth satyr, where speaking of a rich diamond belonging to Bernice, he says,

———hunc dedit olim
Barbarus incestæ, dedit hunc Agrippa sorori.

This lady, who seems to have been the Cleopatra of those times, had once almost drawn aside the celebrated Titus; but that youthful conqueror at length subdued his passion. "Fuere qui accensum desiderio Berenices reginæ crederent. Neque abhorrebat a Berenice juvenilis animus: sed gerendis rebus nullum ex eo impedimentum." Tacit. hist. l. II. c. 3. See likewise Suetonius in Tit. c. 7.

15. 16. 17. of converſation between them, Feſtus mentioned what had been done in it—the circumſtances of the trial—and the frivolous ac-
18. cuſation brought againſt him. He had ſuppoſed, he ſaid, the Jewiſh prieſts would have laid ſome civil crime to his charge:
19. but inſtead of that, he had been accuſed chiefly of holding a few ſuperſtitious opinions; particularly about one Jeſus, who had been
20. executed, and whom Paul affirmed to be ſtill alive. As theſe were points, Feſtus ſaid, about which he had no knowledge himſelf, and which he thought could only be decided properly in a Jewiſh court, he had wiſhed to have the affair heard at Jeruſalem.
21. But as the priſoner, who was a Roman citizen, had appealed to
22. Cæſar, he had determined to ſend him to Rome.——On this, Agrippa expreſſed a deſire to hear the account which Paul had to give of himſelf: and Feſtus accordingly promiſed, that he ſhould hear him the next day.

23. The next day therefore Paul was ſent for to attend Feſtus, who was accompanied by Agrippa, Bernice, and their principal officers.
24. 25. The proconſul opened the buſineſs by ſaying, that as the priſoner, who had made himſelf ſo offenſive to the Jews, had done nothing worthy of death, and had appealed to Cæſar, he had determined
26. to ſend him to Rome: but as there appeared a very frivolous charge againſt him, he was glad of the opportunity of this hearing before Agrippa, as it might furniſh him with ſome better account of the affair, than he had yet had: for there was ſome-
27. thing very improper, he thought, in ſending a priſoner, and not ſignifying, at the ſame time, the particulars of his crime.

CHAP. XXVI.

Feſtus having thus opened the affair, Agrippa bad Paul make
1. 2. his defence: on which Paul raiſing his hand, thus ſpoke.——I think it is a great happineſs, king Agrippa, that I am allowed to
3. anſwer for myſelf, this day before you; whom I well know to be informed in all the doctrines, and cuſtoms of the Jews. I beſeech

beſeech you therefore to hear me patiently.——My manner of life, 4. 5.
from my earlieſt youth, is very well known to the Jews, if they
would bear witneſs to it; and the principles alſo, which I then
profeſſed. No man was a ſtricter Phariſee; nor more verſed in
the doctrines of that ſect. No man truſted more in thoſe gracious 6. 7.
promiſes, made to our fathers, which are confeſſedly the great
end of the moſaic law; and the great foundation of the hope of
every ſerious Jew. And yet I ſtand here accuſed for believing,
that God hath fulfilled thoſe promiſes, and thoſe hopes by raiſing
Jeſus Chriſt from the dead. No man can on reaſonable grounds, 8.
ſuppoſe it to be an incredible thing that God ſhould raiſe the 9. 10. 11.
dead.—For myſelf, it cannot be imagined I embraced chriſtianity
on a ſlight evidence, when I had entered ſo deeply, and ſo con-
ſcientiouſly into an oppoſition to it; having been long the inſtru-
ment of ſeverity in extirpating it, both in Judea, and other
places.——But my converſion had a ſtill ſtronger ground-work, 12.
than human evidence. It was the immediate work of God.——
Paul then gave a ſummary account of his converſion; and parti- 13. 14. 15.
cularly of the injunctions, which the heavenly viſion had laid upon 16. 17. 18.
him, to be a miniſter, and an apoſtle of chriſtianity; to open the eyes
of the blind; and to draw men to the acknowledgment of the truth—
that through faith, and repentance they might inherit everlaſting life.
——This heavenly viſion, king Agrippa, continued the apoſtle, I have 19.
ever ſince obeyed; and have, every where, both in Judea, and among 20.
the Gentiles, preached merely the inoffenſive doctrines of faith, and
repentance, which are alſo the great tenets of the chriſtian reli-

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4. St. Paul is ſuppoſed by Bp. Lowth, in his commentary on Iſ. liii. 8. to allude to a Jewiſh cuſtom, which had been denied him. See a note on John xviii. 21. where the ſame cuſtom is ſuppoſed to be alluded to.

8. The apoſtle might allude to the Jewiſh hiſtory, or the hiſtory of Chriſt, for inſtances of God's power to raiſe the dead: or, he might mean, that it was as eaſy for Almighty Power to raiſe a dead body, as to create a living one.

gion.

21. gion. This is the only ground of enmity, which the Jews can
22. alledge against me.——Through God's help also I have hitherto been enabled to testify, what is at the same time, intirely agreeable to Moses, and the prophets—that Christ should suffer, and rise
23. from the dead; and be the great author of salvation to all mankind, Gentiles, as well as Jews.

24. As Paul was thus speaking, Festus, who thought these doctrines strange, and inconceivable, called out, with a loud voice, Paul thou art beside thyself. Thy learning makes thee mad.

25. 26. Paul denied the charge; and then turning to Agrippa, appealed to him for the facts, which he had related. He could not, the apostle told him, be ignorant of these things; for they were all
27. very public transactions; nor could he, as he was so nearly connected with the Jews, be ignorant of the tendency of the prophetic writings. And he boldly put the question to him; whether he
28. did not believe the prophets? Agrippa freely confessed that his
29. words had made some impression on him: to which Paul answered, that he wished to God, the truth might have it's full effect, not only on him; but on all, who had heard him that day; and that they might embrace it from conviction, as he had done; tho without suffering, as he had, in it's defence.

30. 31. Paul having ended his speech, Agrippa, and Festus conferring together, concluded, that he had done nothing, that deserved even
32. imprisonment; and Agrippa said, he might certainly have been discharged, if he had not appealed to Cæsar.

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28. Some commentators suppose, that Agrippa's speech, *almost thou persuadest me to be a christian*, was spoken in derision. But it seems more probable, that it was a ray of conviction, which just broke in upon him. Like Felix however he received no lasting impression; for we have no account, that he ever became a christian.

As

As it was determined therefore that Paul ſhould be ſent to Italy, 1. 2.
he was delivered, together with a chriſtian of Theſſalonica, whoſe name was Ariſtarchus, and ſome other priſoners, into the hands of Julius, a centurion of Auguſtus's legion; and carried on board a Myſian veſſel, which was engaged in a trading voyage, along the coaſt of Aſia.

The firſt port they entered, was Sidon, where Julius, with 3.
great civility, gave Paul leave to go on ſhore, and viſit his friends. ——From thence they ſtood to the north, intending to touch 4. 5.
at ſome of the ports of Aſia: but a contrary wind carried them along the coaſt of Cyprus; and they were not able to reach any Aſiatic port, till they arrived at Myra in Lycia.——Here Julius 6.
found an Alexandrian veſſel bound to Italy; and embarked on board it, together with the priſoners under his charge.

From this harbour their voyage was greatly interrupted by contrary 7.
winds; and it was ſeveral days before they were able to reach the eaſtern end of Crete; which they paſſed, with difficulty; and took 8.
ſhelter in a bay, called the Fair-haven, not far from the town of Lacæa.——As it was now late however in the year, juſt after the 9. 10.
faſt of the atonement, when the ſtormy ſeaſon generally ſets in, Paul adviſed the centurion to winter where he was; as there would pro-

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2. It does not certainly appear that Ariſtarchus was a priſoner; nor indeed for what purpoſe he is named. Theſe little particularities however add great value to the truth of a relation; and are ſtrong marks of it's authenticity.

3. From the firſt perſon plural, uſed often in the deſcription of this voyage; it appears that Luke ſtill accompanied Paul.

6. Mr. Bryant, in his diſſertation on the wind Euroclyden, has given us a very ſatisfactory account of the Alexandrine trade to Italy, which conſiſted chiefly in corn. See p. 17.

9. This faſt is kept at the end of September, about the time of the equinoctial winds. See Levit. xxiii. 27 and xvi. 29. Num. xxix. 7. Joſ. Antiq. III. 10. 3.

10. Paul no doubt often ſpoke as a mere man. Here perhaps from ſome ſigns in the heavens, he foreſaw a ſtorm. Many interpreters however ſuppoſe him under the influence of inſpiration. Either ſenſe may be admitted.

bably

11. 12. bably be great danger in putting to ſea. But the centurion liſtened rather to the maſter of the ſhip, and others, who adviſed him to leave the haven, as incommodious to winter in; and to endeavour to reach Phenice. This was a Cretan harbour likewiſe; and a much ſafer road; being totally land-locked by a ſmall iſland; except in the two different directions through which it is entered between
13. the two points of the iſland, and the Cretan coaſt.——Taking the advantage therefore of a gentle breeze from the ſouth, they ſet ſail, coaſting along the ſhores of Crete, in hopes of reaching Phenice
14. without difficulty. But a violent ſtorm aroſe from the north-eaſt,
15. and the ſhip becoming unmanageable, the ſeamen were obliged
16. 17. to let her drive.——At the ſouth-weſt end of Crete lies a ſmall iſland, named Clauda. Under the ſhelter of this land, they got up the boat with great difficulty; and paſſing a cable round the ſhip, drew in all the ſails; and were obliged to reſign themſelves to the mercy of the winds. They were chiefly afraid of the quickſands,
18. towards which the tempeſt drove them.—The next day the ſtorm
19. increaſing, they threw out a quantity of the lading; and the day after they were obliged to cut away a part of the maſts, and rigging.
20. In this condition being toſſed about many days in a raging ſea; and ſeeing neither ſun nor ſtars to direct their courſe, either by day, or night, they gave up all hopes of being ſaved.

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15. The expreſſion in the original is very animated: πλοιȣ μη δυναμενȣ αντοφθαλμειν τω ανεμω: *the ſhip could no longer look the ſtorm in the face.*

17. This practice, which is here called, *undergirding the ſhip*, is in uſe at this day. In Lord Anſon's voyage the captain of a Spaniſh ſhip, we are told, was obliged, in a ſtorm, *to take ſix turns of the cable round the ſhip, to prevent her opening.*

17. Theſe are generally ſuppoſed to have been the African quick-ſands, where, Virgil tells us, Æneas ſuffered the loſs of three of his ſhips.

——Tres Eurus ab alto
In brevia, et ſyrtes urget——

19. What is particularly meant by throwing out *the tackling of the ſhip*, is not eaſy to ſay. It is plain from ver. 40, that *all* their maſts were not cut away.

Paul

Paul however, after they had undergone much fatigue, reminding 21. 22.
the ſeamen of the loſs they had already ſuffered through the neglect
of his advice at Crete, bad them ſtill be of comfort; for he was
aſſured they ſhould all yet be ſaved. This night, ſaid he, the angel 23.
of that God, whom I ſerve, appeared unto me; and informed me, 24. 25. 26.
I muſt be carried to Rome. From this viſion I know we ſhall be
caſt on an iſland: but no lives ſhall be loſt. Truſt therefore in this
aſſurance from God.

The ſhip having now been driven about during fourteen days, and 27. 28.
the ſtorm ſtill continuing, at midnight, the ſeamen conjectured
they drew near land, as they found only twenty fathom of water;
and ſoon after only fifteen. They threw out four anchors therefore 29.
from the ſtern; and wiſhed for the morning. Some of them 30.
however not liking their ſituation in the ſhip; and chuſing rather
to truſt themſelves to the boat, began to let her down, under a pre-
tence of fixing other anchors at the prow.—Paul obſerving this, 31.
told the centurion, that he muſt not ſuffer them to leave the ſhip.
It was not God's intention, he ſaid, to ſave them by a miracle; but
through the means of their own ſtrenuous endeavours. The ſoldiers, 32.
on this, cut the ropes; and let the boat drop into the ſea.

As the day was coming on, Paul, who had now gained a great 33.
aſcendency in the ſhip, called the crew together, and as they had

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27. This ſea is called Adria; but it is generally ſuppoſed, that the Mediterranean, and not the Adriatic, is meant. See Wells's geog. of the New Teſtament. See alſo Bochart. Strabo, and other ancient geographers certainly give great latitude to the Mediterranean: and an old ſcholiaſt upon Dionyſius's Pariegeſis, ſays Το Σικελικον τυτο το πελαγος Λδριαν καλυσι. They call the Sicilian ſea, Adria. See Bp. Pearce's com.

33. This paſſage is very ill tranſlated in our teſtament. The words, in the original, τεσσαρεσκαιδεκατην σεμερον ημεραν προσδοκωντες, ασιτοι διατελειτε μηδεν προσλαβομενοι, may thus be literally tranſlated; *All this fourteenth day have you waited, and continued faſting, having taken nothing.* The day before is meant; as the day and night made the Jewiſh day.

34. eaten little, or nothing the day before, he advised them to take some refreshment; assuring them again, that not one of them should
35. perish.—He then called for food; and giving thanks, he distributed
36. it among them. The apostle's behaviour occasioned a general chearfulness, and alacrity among all that were on board.

37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. Their first business was to lighten the ship, by throwing out the remaining part of the wheat, with which she was laden.——As day came on, the land appeared; but what land, they knew not. Observing however a creek, they determined, if possible, to run the ship into it. Taking up the anchors therefore, and hoisting a sail, they loosed the helm, and ran directly for the shore.

Between them, and the coast lay a bank, or shelf, formed by two opposite currents. On this shelf the ship ran aground; and the fore part being immoveably fixed; the stern was beaten in pieces by the violence of the waves. In this exigence the soldiers advised to put the prisoners to death, lest any of them should escape. But the centurion, through his particular regard for Paul, prevented them; and all had liberty to endeavour to save themselves. They who could swim, leaped first into the sea; and the rest got on rafts, or broken pieces of the ship: so that, in the end, every person on board, tho the company consisted of two hundred and seventy-six people, got safe to shore.

CHAP. XXVIII. 1. 2. As soon as they landed they found the island was called Malta; the inhabitants of which, tho a barbarous people, administered to their wants, and shewed them every kindness in their power.

Soon

1. Mr. Bryant has endeavoured to shew, that Paul was not shipwrecked on the island of Malta, but on another island of the same name in the Adriatic. I admire his learning; but cannot easily accede to his conclusion.

In

Soon after their landing, it happened, that as Paul was taking 3.
up a bundle of wood for the fire, a viper, which was concealed
in it, faſtened upon his hand. The people, who ſtood around 4.
him, obſerving it, concluded immediately, that he was ſome very
wicked perſon, whom the vengeance of heaven ſtill purſued, tho

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In the firſt place, there are very good authorities, particularly that of the Alexandrine MS, for reading Ευρακυλων, for Ευροκλυδων. If ſo, the ſhip was *driven* by a *north-eaſt* wind; in which ſituation ſhe could ſcarce poſſibly enter the gulf of the Adriatic; but would be very naturally driven towards Malta.

Secondly, another ſhip is mentioned, (xxviii. 11) as driven out of it's courſe in the ſame direction, and to the ſame place, as that in which St. Paul was driven. To ſuppoſe two ſhips driven ſo exceedingly out of their courſe, is perhaps ſuppoſing too much.

Thirdly, the manners of the people, as deſcribed by St. Luke, agree much better with the inhabitants of Malta, than with thoſe of the Adriatic iſle. The inhabitants of the latter, according to Mr. Bryant's own account, were the moſt lawleſs people upon earth. They lived by piracy; and for their crimes had been almoſt extirpated by the Romans. It is true, St. Paul calls the inhabitants of the iſland where he landed, a *barbarous people:* but it may eaſily be ſuppoſed he called them ſo merely in conformity to the Greeks and Romans, who ſtiled all people *barbarians*, who ſpoke a language different from their own. Thus Paul himſelf in another place, ſays, (1 Cor. xiv. 11) *If I know not the meaning of the voice, I ſhall be unto him that ſpeaketh a barbarian; and he that ſpeaketh, ſhall be a barbarian unto me.* Certain it is, that by whatever *name* he called them, he meant to expreſs no barbarity in their *manners*; as one ſhould naturally expect in a neſt of proſcribed pirates. They ſhewed the apoſtle, and his company great kindneſs from the very moment of their landing. The country was civilized enough to afford lodgings for two hundred and ſeventy-ſix people; and when all this company departed, they were not only *loaded with ſuch things as were neceſſary*; but preſented with many gifts. There ſeems alſo to have been a Roman governor in the iſland, as one ſhould judge from his name, and the manner in which he is introduced.

Fourthly, after the winter was over, we are told, that when Paul, and his company embarked again, they touched firſt at Syracuſe in Sicily; from whence they went to Rhegium. This was exactly their right courſe from Malta; but ſomewhat out of it, if they came from the Adriatic iſle. In that caſe, they muſt have touched firſt at Rhegium, and then at Syracuſe; if they had any buſineſs at Syracuſe at all.

Laſtly, a tradition yet exiſts at Malta of St. Paul's landing there. On the north-eaſt coaſt a place is ſhewn, bearing the name of *La cala di S. Paolo:* and here (as a captain of an Engliſh ſhip, who had been there, aſſured me) a place may be ſeen, *where two ſeas meet.*

The iſland of Malta takes it's name from the quantity of honey it produces.

6. he was ſuffered to eſcape the ſtorm. But when they ſaw him ſhake the viper into the fire; and inſtead of ſwelling, and falling down dead, as they expected, appear not to be in the leaſt injured,
7. they changed their minds, and thought him a God.

Near the place, where the ſhip went on ſhore, the principal perſon of the iſland, whoſe name was Publius, reſided; who
8. ſending for Paul, and his company, kindly entertained them at his houſe, till they could get lodgings provided.——Soon after, Paul hearing that Publius's father was ſeized with a fever, and
9. dyſentery, went to him, and by his prayers reſtored him to health. ——This brought many of the iſland, who had diſeaſes, to Paul;
10. 11. all of whom he healed.

They had now been three months in Malta; during which time they had received many tokens of kindneſs from the friendly iſlanders: but the winter being now paſt, Julius began to think of continuing
12. his voyage to Rome. He hired an Alexandrian veſſel therefore,
13. which had wintered in the iſle, whoſe name was Caſtor and Pollux, in which he ſet ſail; and landed firſt at Syracuſe, where the ſhip continued three days.——From thence coaſting the eaſtern ſide of Sicily the veſſel anchored in the bay of Rhegium: and the next day

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6. Some late travellers have aſſerted, that in the iſland of Malta there are no venomous creatures. It is rather, I think, aſſerting too boldly a point ſo difficult to be aſcertained. But on a ſuppoſition there are none *now*, it is no more a proof, that there never were any, than it is a proof, that there never were any wolves in England, becauſe there are none at this time.

11. Called ſo probably from the images of Caſtor and Pollux on her prow; as was uſual among the ancients:

——————aurato fulgebat Apolline puppis.
Æn. X.

13. The Greek word is περιελθοντες; which is tranſlated, *fetched a compaſs*; but it is fetching no compaſs to ſail along the coaſt of Sicily from Syracuſe to Rhegium. The meaning therefore muſt either be, that they *ſailed along the coaſt*; which the word may expreſs: or, if it be tranſlated, *fetched a compaſs*, it muſt mean, that they were obliged to make ſeveral *tacks*, as the ſeamen call them, before they could reach Rhegium.

obtain-

obtaining a favourable breeze from the ſouth, paſſed the ſtraits, and ſoon arrived at Puteoli. Here Paul found ſeveral chriſtians; 14.
and at their earneſt deſire, ſtaid a week with them; and then ſet out for Rome.——His approach being known, ſeveral chriſtians 15.
came out of the city to meet him, ſome as far as the three Taverns; and others as far as the Appii forum. Paul thanked God for his goodneſs; and took new courage, on finding that the chriſtian religion was ſo openly profeſſed at Rome, that it's converts durſt ſhew their regard to a perſecuted apoſtle.

On their arrival at Rome, Julius delivered the priſoners to the 16.
præfect of the prætorian cohorts: but repreſenting Paul's caſe favourably, the apoſtle was permitted to dwell by himſelf, with a ſingle ſoldier to guard him.

There were, at this time, among the regular inhabitants of Rome, 17. 18. 19.
many Jews, who had ſettled there on various occaſions. Paul 20.
therefore, within a day or two after his arrival, ſent a meſſage to the principal of them, intreating them to come to him at his lodging. When they were aſſembled, he told them, that as his caſe was a peculiar one, he had ſent for them to give them the particulars of it.——He then informed them of the circumſtances

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14. This ſhews how much the apoſtle was favoured by the centurion.

15. It is remarkable, that Tully alſo mentions *theſe two places together*, in one of his letters to Atticus (II. 10). He is ſpeaking of two notes which he had written to him, as he left Rome. He wrote one, he ſays, ab Appii foro horâ quartâ: dederam aliam, paulo ante, in tribus Tabernis. The former of theſe places was about fifty miles from Rome, the latter about thirty.

16. The præfect of the prætorian cohorts, at this time, was Burrhus, an officer of great worth; who, with Seneca, endeavoured to check the early improprieties, and abſurdities of Nero.—Paul's confinement was the moſt eaſy the Roman law allowed. According to the Roman cuſtom, a chain of a convenient length was faſtened round the right arm of the priſoner, and round the left of the ſoldier. We need not however ſuppoſe, that this chain was always faſtened: but only when he went abroad.

of

of his trial; and the reasons, which had induced him to make that appeal, which had brought him to Rome—he did not mean, he said, to accuse his countrymen; but to defend himself—assuring them, at the same time, that nothing had been laid to his charge at Jerusalem; but the propagation of that gospel, to which all the prophets pointed.

21. When he had done speaking, the Jews assured him, they had heard nothing to his disadvantage from any of their brethren in
22. Judæa: only this they knew, that the christian religion was every where opposed; and therefore they desired to know from him what could be said for it.

23. Accordingly a day was appointed, and a numerous assembly of Jews coming to his lodgings, he expounded the gospel to them, and shewed them how exactly it had fulfilled the predictions of
24. 25. 26. 27. Moses, and the prophets.——What he said, had it's effect on many. But others paid no attention to his discourse. These he reminded of the prophet Isaiah's severe description of persons in their situation, who purposely excluded themselves from the
28. truth.——He then opened to them the intention of God in offering to the Gentiles the blessings of the gospel, which they
29. would accept, tho the Jews had rejected them.——It appeared however, that the Jews had violent disputes among themselves about these things.

30. 31. After this, Paul continued two years at Rome, in his own house; which he turned into a kind of school of religion; where

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26. See Isa. vi. 9.

30. The case of Paul, as a minister of the gospel, was now much improved, by his appeal. While he was prisoner in Judea, it does not appear, that he exercised any apostolical functions. Now, he received all who came to him—made converts—wrote epistles to distant churches—sent out fellow-labourers; and in short, exercised all the apostolic duties, except that of visiting

where he preached the gospel without the least molestation from any one.

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ing in person. We have no reason therefore to regret the apostle's appeal to Cæsar. It was a prudent measure on his part, as he could not otherwise have avoided the malicious persecution of the Jews: and it discovers the over-ruling providence of God, in the various happy events, which were occasioned by it.

END OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

GENERAL PREFACE

TO

ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES.

WE have ſeen the particulars of the life of our bleſſed Saviour recorded in the writings of the four evangeliſts; and have ſeen alſo, in the Acts of the apoſtles, the manner, in which the chriſtian religion was firſt propagated among the heathen nations. We come now to the epiſtles, or thoſe letters, which the apoſtles wrote to the ſeveral churches they had eſtabliſhed; either to confirm their faith; or to remove the errors, which had been introduced among them.

Moſt of theſe epiſtles were written by St. Paul; whoſe writings are commonly eſteemed among the moſt difficult parts of ſcripture. Tho he is conſidered as a cloſe reaſoner by thoſe*, who are themſelves the greateſt maſters of reaſoning; yet it often requires more than ordinary attention, to follow his argument.

One ſource of obſcurity is the quickneſs of his ideas. They croud upon him. One thought often ſtarts another, which does not directly follow it in place; but being neceſſary for the ſupport of ſome point, ariſing from the ſubject, tho not leading immediately to it, requires that we ſhould watch the writer's return to his principal point, with ſome attention.

The undetermined uſe of the pronouns *I* and *we*, is thought alſo by learned men to occaſion obſcurity in St. Paul's writings. Sometimes the apoſtle ſpeaks in his own perſon: ſometimes as a Jew: ſometimes as a Gentile: ſometimes as an infidel; and ſometimes as a believer.

But the chief obſcurity in St. Paul's writings, ariſes from the ſubject. The other epiſtles, which are called *catholic*, are commonly written on *general* topics of religion. The epiſtles of St. Paul are of a different conſtruction. They are principally intended to oppoſe ſuch antichriſtian

* See Mr. Lock, on St. Paul's epiſtles.

tenets, as were getting ground in the apoſtle's time. Many parts indeed of theſe epiſtles are direct anſwers to queſtions, or to the particular ſtatement of caſes, which had been put to the apoſtle: and the obſcurity ariſes from our having only the anſwer before us; but neither the queſtion, nor the ſtate of the caſe.

PREFACE
TO
ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

THE moſt obſtinate controverſy, in the early age of the chriſtian church, was that, which was raiſed by the Jewiſh chriſtians in behalf of the law of Moſes; which the more zealous among them contended was neceſſary to juſtification. This controverſy was carried on with great acrimony both at Rome, and in other places, where chriſtian converts conſiſted of Jews, and Gentiles. Nor need we wonder at the great aſcendency of the Jewiſh chriſtians over the Gentiles, when we conſider, that Jeſus was himſelf a Jew—that his life had been ſpent in Judea—that his perſonal application had been made ſolely to the Jews—and that the Jewiſh ſcriptures afforded one of the ſtrongeſt proofs of chriſtianity. When therefore, after our Saviour's death, the completion of thoſe grand prophecies with regard to the *rejection of the Jews*; the *call of the Gentiles* and the *total abrogation of the Moſaic economy*, was taking place, the bulk of the Jewiſh nation was highly offended. This revolution indeed was ſo mortifying to them, that even many, who had ſeriouſly embraced the chriſtian religion, could not eaſily lay aſide their prejudices on this head. Their pride in being God's favorite people—their contempt of the Gentiles—their belief of inheriting the promiſes of God, as Abraham's children—their attachment to the temple-worſhip—to circumciſion, and the other ceremonies

ceremonies of the Mosaic law, as necessary to justification—and their throwing scruples, and difficulties in the way of the Gentile converts—were opinions, and practices, which the apostles thought it highly necessary at all times to oppose.

These are the chief subjects of the following epistle to the Romans; in which St. Paul gives the new converts at Rome, both Jews, and Gentiles, just notions of the religion they had received. He tells them, that the ceremonies of the Jewish law were now fulfilled, and abolished—that altho many *individuals* among the Jews might embrace the gospel—yet as a *people* they were rejected—that, with regard to religious privileges, no *one* nation was now more favoured by God than *another*—and that the Gentiles, according to the predictions of the prophets, were called, together with the Jews, to partake equally of the benefits of the gospel; and on faith, and repentance to be equal inheritors with them of everlasting life.

But tho *this controversy* with the Jews concerns the christians of *these times* very little; yet *other controversies* for want of attending to the scope of the apostle's argument, have been ingrafted upon it, which import them much—controversies particularly about *predestination*, and *faith*.

The controversy about *predestination* probably did not arise in the church, till that early one with regard to the *Jews and Gentiles*, on which it is founded, had been forgotten. The scope, and connection of St. Paul's warm, and figurative expressions with regard to *vessels of mercy*, and *vessels of wrath fitted for destruction*, not being sufficiently attended to, the *primary* meaning of them was lost with a large party of christians; and instead of being explained as *terms* expressing the general *faith, and penitence* of one nation; and the general *hardened infidelity* of another, they were made to express the *salvation of one man*, and the *damnation of another*—not according to the gospel-terms of faith, and repentance; but by the absolute decrees of God. Whereas, in fact, the apostle seems not to have the least allusion to *particular persons*.

From the same discourses mistakes again have arisen with regard to *faith, and works*. The apostle's argument seems chiefly addressed to the Jews, who conceived the Mosaic ceremonies, or the works of the law, to be necessary to salvation, tho we find no traces among them of any controversy about other works. It is most probable therefore, that the apostle

apoſtle writing to the Jewiſh chriſtians, treats a ſubject, which we know was ſo much agitated among them; and that when he ſpeaks of *juſtification by faith*, he means, in general, *juſtification by the goſpel*, which we accept through *faith:* and when he ſpeaks of *works*, his argument moſt frequently requires him to mean the *ceremonies, and obſervances of the Moſaic law**.——I ſpeak in general, for he ſometimes, no doubt, treats of that great goſpel-doctrine, the inſufficiency of all moral works to procure God's favour, without the merits of Chriſt.

In this epiſtle the apoſtle, after his introduction, expreſſes his joy at the ſteadineſs of his new converts; and intimates his intention of going to Rome. 401——ſhews the neceſſity of the goſpel diſpenſation; firſt to the heathen world; and ſecondly to the Jews. 402——anſwers an objection, with regard to the utility of the Jewiſh law. 403——reſumes his argument. 404——General idea of chriſtianity. 404——The caſe of Abraham conſidered. 405——applied to the Jewiſh law. 405——nature of Abraham's faith. 406——applied to chriſtians. 406——Love of God ſhewn in the chriſtian diſpenſation. 407——univerſality of Chriſt's atonement. 407——holineſs of life the great end of chriſtianity. 408——ſalvation through Chriſt as neceſſary to the Jew as to the Gentile. 409——bleſſedneſs of the goſpel. 410——particularly in our afflictions. 412——The apoſtle bemoans the ſtate of the Jewiſh nation. 413——vindicates the jndgments of God. 413——ſhews that his treatment both of the Jews, and the Gentiles is agreeable to the predictions of the prophets. 415——and that Moſes himſelf pointed out God's intention of ſuperſeding the law by the goſpel. 416——the goſpel ought of courſe therefore to be preached to the Gentiles. 417——The rejection of the Jews only partial, and temporary. 417——the converſion of the Gentiles will, in part, contribute to convert the Jews. 418——but a time will certainly come, when their *national* converſion ſhall be effected. 419——The Jew, and Gentile converts exhorted to live together in purity and peace. 419——Inſtructions with regard to civil government. 420——Difference in opinion ſhould create no animoſity amongſt chriſtians. 421——The apoſtle intimates a deſign of viſiting the Roman chriſtians. 424——and concludes with particular commendations; and cautions againſt ill-deſigning perſons. 425.

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* See a note on Acts, xxi. 21.

EPISTLE

OF

ST. PAUL to the ROMANS.

CHAP. I.

PAUL, appointed by the immediate revelation of God, to be an apoſtle of the Gentiles; and to teach the religion of that Saviour, who being foretold by the prophets, and deſcended in a natural courſe from David, was declared by miracles, and his reſurrection from the dead, to be the Son of God—grace and peace to all the chriſtian converts at Rome. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

It is with great thankfulneſs to God, that I hear of your ſteadineſs in the chriſtian faith. My prayers, be aſſured, you always have; and among my other requeſts to God, it is one, that I may ſee you ſoon; and that we may comfort each other by our ſpiritual intercourſe. Often have I intended to viſit you; but have been hitherto prevented. My apoſtleſhip extends both to the civilized, and barbarous parts of the 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 14. 15. 16. 17.

17. *As it is written, the juſt ſhall live by faith.* This is a very appoſite application of a paſſage in Habbakuk. That prophet had been repreſenting to the Jews (chap. ii. 4) the approach of captivity; and takes occaſion to ſhew them, that the proud, and obſtinate ſhould ſuffer; and that they who had faith in the prophecy, ſhould eſcape.—*The righteouſneſs of God* ſignifies, in this paſſage, as in other parts of ſcripture, rather the *manner of being juſtified*, than the *righteouſneſs of God's nature.*

Gentile world: and I am not aſhamed to preach the goſpel of Chriſt, even at Rome—that goſpel, which holds out, through faith, the only means of ſalvation vouchſafed to fallen man.

18. 19. 20. The guilt of ſin is pointed out by nature. God hath ſtrongly impreſſed a ſenſe of religion, and duty on the minds of men. From the viſible creation they might have inferred an inviſible Creator. 21. 22. But inſtead of purſuing ſuch inferences of reaſon, and ſhewing that gratitude, which they ought, to the divine goodneſs; they gave 23. themſelves up to their corrupt imaginations; ſetting up the reſem- 24. 25. blances of men, and even of beaſts, as the objects of worſhip.—— 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. An abominable practice of courſe followed an abominable religion; and there is not a ſingle inſtance of wickedneſs, which has not been commonly practiſed, and even encouraged in the heathen world.

CHAP. II. In the mean time, is the ſelf-approving Jew leſs guilty? In con- 1. 2. demning his Gentile neighbours he condemns himſelf. No doubt he is right, in denouncing the judgments of God againſt wickedneſs: 3. but does he not involve himſelf in the ſame ſentence? Nay, has 4. he not more to anſwer for, from his ſcorning the goodneſs of God, which would lead him, as it were, by the hand, to repentance—

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18. *Who hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs*—who impriſon it, as it were, by their wicked luſts, and paſſions.

21. It is remarkable, that *gratitude* is here put for the whole of religion. Similar expreſſions are frequent in ſcripture; in which a *conſiderable part* is put for the *whole*.

24, &c. We have the ſame proceſs of wickedneſs from idolatry, given us in the Wiſdom of Solomon; in which (cap. XIV) we find the following paſſages.

"Therefore upon the idols of the Gentiles ſhall be a viſitation. They are become a "ſtumbling-block to the ſouls of men. The deviſing of idols was the beginning of ſpiritual "fornication; and the invention of them, the corruption of life. They aſcribe unto ſtones, "and ſtocks the *incommunicable name*. Moreover, it was not enough for them, that they "erred in the knowledge of God; they ſlew their children in ſacrifices—they uſed ſtrange "rites—they kept neither lives, nor marriages any longer undefiled—there reigned in all men "ſlaughter, theft, diſſimulation, perjury, changing of kind, diſorder in marriages, adultery, "and ſhameleſs uncleanneſs.—The worſhipping of idols is the beginning, the cauſe, and the "end of all evil."

from

from his rejecting the means of grace—and from his defying that 5. 6. 7. 8.
righteous tribunal, which in exact proportion will distribute reward, 9. 10.
and punishment both to Jew, and Gentile? There the Jewish 11.
prejudice shall have no place. Every sinner, in that righteous day, 12. 16.
shall be judged impartially, according to the light he has received.
The upright Gentile, and the nominal Jew, shall find very different 13. 14. 15.
treatment. Externals will be of no avail.

You call yourself a Jew; you boast of your exact knowledge in 17. 18. 19.
the law; and of your being a guide of the ignorant.——But your 20.
precepts are confined to others. They direct not your own practice. 21. 22. 23.
Your actions contradict your preaching; and you continue to fulfill 24.
that ancient complaint of the prophet, that the Jew even increases
the irreligion of the Gentile. What! is circumcision, do you 25.
suppose, an excuse for sin? Shall that, which profits you only, if
you *keep the law*; be a cover to you for *transgressing it?* Shall 26.
a mere ceremony, unconnected with morals, give you an advantage
over the Gentile? Or rather, shall not his natural probity discoun- 27.
tenance you, if you have nothing to boast, but mere externals? It 28.
is not outward circumcision, that constitutes the Jew: it is the 29.
circumcision of the heart only, which meets the approbation of
God.

Since then both Jews, and Gentiles are thus equally involved in CHAP. III.
guilt, it may be asked, What advantage ariseth from the Jewish 1.
dispensation?

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12. *As many as have sinned without law*—that is, without the Mosaic law, or under the law of nature.

16. I have here transposed the 16th verse, and added it to the 12th, following the opinion of some able interpreters.

21. See Matt. xxiii. 3.

22. *Idolatry* is spiritual *sacrilege*. In Justinian's code, under the title of sacrilege we find, *Imperatori eripere, quod ejus est*.

24. This alludes probably to Ezek. xxxvi. 23: or Isa. lii. 5.

2. I anſwer, chiefly in it's being the vehicle of conveying through different ages, God's promiſes of ſalvation; which are, and will
3. be compleated, notwithſtanding the infidelity of the Jews themſelves.
4. The infidelity of man only the more recommends the truth of God.

5. If then, replies the Jew, the truth of God be recommended by my infidelity; does it not ſeem hard, that I, who am the author of ſo happy an effect, ſhould be the object of God's diſpleaſure?

6. What! ſhall we impute injuſtice, in any inſtance, to the great
7. Judge of heaven and earth? Extend the doctrine farther: let every
8. other ſinner conceive himſelf the favorite of heaven; and let the ſlander paſs univerſally, that the apoſtles of Chriſt preach the neceſſity of evil, that good may ariſe from it.——I hope ſo miſchievous an error will never get ground among you.

9. On the whole then we conclude, that both Jew, and Gentile
10. 11. 12. are in a ſinful, unjuſtified ſtate—a ſtate deſcribed by David in the
13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. fourteenth pſalm, and in other parts of ſcripture, where we have catalogues given of various kinds of wickedneſs. The Jew may
19. apply ſuch paſſages perhaps only to the Gentile: but let him be aſſured, that an application was intended alſo to him. The prophet
20. undoubtedly means to deſcribe the *univerſal guilt of mankind.*—From hence therefore we conclude that the law could not juſtify. It gave man indeed a more accurate knowledge of ſin; but could not ſave him from it's effects.

21.
22. 23. 24. But now another mode of ſalvation, and yet teſtified by the law, and the prophets, is offered to mankind; tho the law itſelf could not offer one—ſalvation through faith in Chriſt; which as *all had*
25. *ſinned,* is freely *offered to all.* This great mode of ſalvation God

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20. By the *law* here the apoſtle ſeems to mean (in order to give his argument it's full force) *law of every kind,* moral, and ceremonial.

hath

hath now held forth for the remiſſion of ſins; and hath in one act, 26.
declared both his truth in the completion of his promiſes; and
his goodneſs in ſhewing mercy to ſinful man. All pre-eminence 27.
then and boaſting are excluded. The privileges of the law are of 28.
no avail. God is not now ſtiled the God of Iſrael; but the God 29.
of all mankind. The circumciſed, and uncircumciſed are all juſ- 30.
tified alike by faith; which is ſo far from being contradictory to 31.
the law, that in fact it is a confirmation of it by eſtabliſhing it's
promiſes.

Indeed you will find this mode of juſtification by faith even CHAP. IV.
prior to the law. Conſider the caſe of Abraham. On what, I aſk, 1. 2.
was his juſtification grounded? You find nothing ſaid of his glorying
in any works, or obſervances; or, of his being juſtified by any
thing of that kind. But you read, that *he believed in God*; and 3.
that this *belief was counted to him for righteouſneſs*. Now if Abraham 4.
had depended on his own righteouſneſs for his juſtification, he
would have claimed it *as his due*. But you ſee he makes no ſuch 5.
claim; receiving it as the free grace of God, who accepted his 6. 7. 8.
faith for righteouſneſs: juſt as David alſo ſpeaks of God's juſtifying
his faithful people by mercifully blotting out their ſins.

The preſent queſtion then, how far the Jewiſh law avails in 9. 10.
juſtifying it's profeſſors, admits an eaſy anſwer from the caſe of

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28. The word *law* in this paſſage, ſeems to be confined to the Moſaic law.

30. *By faith* and *through faith* ſeem to convey the ſame meaning.

3. Gen. xv. 6.

3. As a comment on St. Paul in this place, we muſt read the following paſſage from St. James ii. 21. *Was not Abraham, our father, juſtified by works, when he had offered Iſaac, his ſon, upon the altar? Seeſt thou, how faith wrought with his works; and by works was faith made perfect.* From the compariſon of theſe two paſſages we conclude, that it was the holy life, which Abraham led, through his faith in the promiſes of God, that was his recommendation to mercy.

8. See Pſ. xxxii. 1.

Abraham.

Abraham. We have ſeen that Abraham *was juſtified by faith.* We
11. 12. 13. find alſo, that he was juſtified, *before he was circumciſed.* Circumciſion therefore, ſo far from being the *cauſe of his acceptance* with God, was only the *ſeal of that acceptance*, which had been vouchſafed to him *through faith.* Thus he became properly the father of all
14. true believers, without any diſtinction of Jew, or Gentile. So that if the Jews claim the inheritance of the promiſe from Abraham, merely as Jews, they plainly ſet aſide the only title, by which that
15. 16. 17. patriarch himſelf inherited; and leave themſelves ſtill under the penalties of the law. God hath promiſed acceptance therefore on the condition of *faith*; which is not only an eaſier condition; but the only way he hath appointed to fulfill the promiſe made to Abraham, of making him *the father of many nations.*

18. 19. 20. 21. 22. Conſider then the nature of Abraham's faith. God had promiſed him a numerous poſterity in his old age; which to him appeared like raiſing the dead. He had ſuch faith however in God, that without heſitation he firmly believed, that he, who promiſed, was able to perform: and this faith was imputed to him for righteouſneſs.

23. 24. 25. Nor can we ſuppoſe that Abraham's faith was caſually mentioned. It was recorded certainly for our inſtruction. The ſame righteouſneſs will be imputed to us, if we follow the example of Abraham; and as firmly believe in that God, who raiſed up Chriſt from the dead; who dying for our offences, roſe again to eſtabliſh, and confirm his promiſes.

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13. *Heir of the world*; that is, of all the faithful, that ſhould be collected from every part of the world; who ſhould be given him, as it were, for a poſterity. The Hebrews uſe the word *heir* in that ſenſe.

17. *Who calleth thoſe things*, &c. that is, who ſpeaketh of things, which do not yet exiſt, as if they really did exiſt; becauſe he foreſees their exiſtence in due time.

24. The nature of Abraham's faith is here again plain from this paſſage. He believed in the promiſes of God; and through that faith he performed the will of God.

On

CHAP. V.

On this true faith then let us reſt; and having obtained peace with God through Chriſt, let us evermore rejoice in this bleſſed hope; and be ready to ſuffer any affliction for the ſake of our profeſſion. Affliction is the nurſe of every chriſtian virtue; and tends, in proportion as the love of the world fails, to dilate our hearts with the love of God—of that God, who gave his Son to die for us, even when we were the greateſt ſinners. However upright a man's general character may be, he will not eaſily find a friend ready to ſuffer death for his ſake. Where benefits indeed have been conferred, the effects of gratitude may be great. In what light then ſhould we conſider the love of God, who gave his Son to die for us, even when we were engaged in the moſt hardened oppoſition to him? From ſuch an inſtance of kindneſs in the death of Chriſt, we cannot but have the moſt aſſured hope from his reſurrection; and evermore rejoice in that great atonement, which has opened to us everlaſting happineſs.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11.

Thus was redemption, through Chriſt, as general, as death through Adam. For tho Adam's *mode of tranſgreſſion* could not be general; yet every man followed his example, and ſinned againſt ſome law: for where there is no law, there can be no ſin. And thus from Adam's time, the reign of death has been univerſal.—But now obſerve the difference between the fall, and the redemption of

12. 13. 14. 15.

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3. *We glory in tribulation.* The apoſtle very often advances this doctrine, to ſhew the Jews the nature of Chriſt's kingdom; as our Saviour before had often ſhewn his diſciples. The Jews from the beginning were unwilling to acknowledge, that the Meſſiah's kingdom was to have any thing to do with tribulation.

6. Υπερ ασεβων απεθανε properly ſignifies *he died in the room, or ſtead of ſinners.*

7. Goodwin in his Jewiſh antiquities, (l. I. c. IX) has a very ingenious explication of this celebrated paſſage. He ſuppoſes it to allude to the rabbinical diſtinction of mankind, into *good, righteous,* and *ſinful.* The *good* man is he, who acts in a ſphere, ſuperior to all human laws; while the *righteous* man is ſatisfied with the boundaries they allow him.—Some inſtead of δικαιε read αδικε.—It is thus in the Syrian verſion.

mankind.

mankind. Obſerve how much the benefit of the latter outweighs
16. the injury of the former. By the one, *Adam's particular treſpaſs*
17. was puniſhed: through the other, *all our ſins in general* are forgiven.
By the former, *death* was incurred: by the latter *eternal happineſs*
18. 19. was obtained. And obſerve farther, that as all the nations of the
earth were rendered guilty by the offence of Adam; it follows,
that all the nations of the earth ſhall be reſtored by Chriſt. The
20. law, no doubt, gave new powers to ſin; and the more ſin triumphs,
21. ſo much greater appears the efficacy of grace, which counteracts it's
CHAP. VI. ruinous effects.

1. Shall we then make the grace of the goſpel an apology for ſin?
2. God forbid! The chriſtian, by his profeſſion, is dead to ſin.
3. 4. The very act of his initiation implies it. What does baptiſm re-
5. 6. preſent, but our dying to ſin, and riſing to righteouſneſs? How
again are we to imitate the death of Chriſt, but by crucifying our
ſins; that being renewed in righteouſneſs by his death, we may
partake of his reſurrection? He that is *dead*, is free from ſin.
7. 8. The life of a chriſtian ſhould be ſuch a *death*. Unleſs, in this
moral ſenſe, we die with Chriſt, we cannot hope to live with him.
9. 10. After his crucifixion, Chriſt died no more. Having died once
11. for ſin, an eternity of life was before him. You too have died
once to ſin: be now therefore for ever alive to God, through
12. 13. Chriſt.——Let the chriſtian then, as far as he can, make this
mortal life a life of purity; and dedicate all his paſſions, and
affections to that holineſs; which his profeſſion demands. Being
14. delivered from the terror of the law, he is now received into mercy
15. through grace.—Only ſtill let me caution you not to preſume
16. on God's grace. Your ſervice muſt not be divided between ſin,
and the goſpel. You muſt renounce the one, before you can
17. 18. 19. attach yourſelves to the other. But I truſt in God, your choice

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4. This idea alludes to the ancient mode of immerſion.

is

is already made; and that, whatever you *may have been*, you *have now* withdrawn yourſelves from the bondage of ſin, and dedicated yourſelves to a happier ſervice.——Take then a review of your 20. 21.
lives; and conſider, whether any advantages accrued from ſin, which were equivalent to it's conſequences—whether any of it's enjoyments could counterbalance miſery, and death? Conſider alſo, 22. 23.
whether you have any reaſon to repent of theſe new engagements; which lead you through a life of holineſs, to everlaſting happineſs?

CHAP. VII.

Having thus addreſſed myſelf to chriſtian converts, in general, 1. 2. 3.
I now addreſs myſelf particularly to the Jewiſh chriſtian. His attachment to the Moſaic law, is exactly ſimilar to the caſe of marriage; which is only an obligation, till the death of one of the parties. So that the law, to which you were once eſpouſed, 4.
being now dead, it is no more apoſtacy in you to embrace the goſpel; than it is adultery for a woman to be married to a ſecond huſband, after the death of a firſt. From the effect of thoſe tranſ- 5. 6.
greſſions, which under the Moſaic law, admitted only legal atonement, you are now delivered: your ſervices are now transferred from carnal obſervances, to ſpiritual attainments.

Does the law then, you aſk, lead us into ſin? 7.

No otherwiſe than by giving us a more exact knowledge of it; and revealing to us God's commandments againſt it. Thus, for inſtance, I ſhould never have known the guilt of covetouſneſs, unleſs the law had ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not covet*. For the guilt of 8.
ſin is increaſed in proportion to the clearneſs of the law againſt it. Had you been born Gentiles, you would have known leſs; 9. 10. 11.
and of courſe have ſinned leſs. But the knowledge of the law

1. *As long as he liveth.* It ſhould be tranſlated, *as long as it liveth*; meaning the law.

12. 13. 14. introduced alſo the knowledge of ſin. The law then is good;
15. but it is our tranſgreſſion of it, which is the miſchief. Our
16. 17. 18. 19. tranſgreſſions are all againſt knowledge. The very witneſs of my conſcience proves the excellency of the law. What is right, I know. The difficulty lies in the performance. In fact through
20. 21. 22. 23. the corruption of my nature I cannot fulfill the law. While we live in the world, we ſhall always experience the oppoſition between the law of God, and the temptations of worldly things:
24. and in the extremity of guilt, the Jew, as well as the Gentile, muſt cry out, Who will deliver me from this cruel bondage?

25. CHAP. VIII. 1. Here then comes in the gracious offer of the goſpel, which alone can hold out a remedy in our diſtreſs. That remiſſion of
2. 3. 4. ſin, which the law could not provide, the goſpel offers to all, who live agreeably to it's precepts. We are freed from the effects of ſin and death; and in the room of that perfect obedience, which the law demands, the goſpel graciouſly points out, through Chriſt,
5. 6. the humble endeavours of a ſpiritual life; to which it's motives, aided by the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, as naturally lead, as the motives of the world do to a carnal life: and this carnal life tends as directly to miſery, as the ſpiritual life does to hap-
7. 8. 9. pineſs. For the worldly mind is always at emnity with God. It is the heavenly mind only that is pleaſing to him: and if you live under the influence of God's bleſſed Spirit, which dwells in
10. 11. you; you are then, and then only, of Chriſt's fold. In that bleſſed ſtate you are ſubject to no death, but a mere temporal

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24. *Who will deliver me from the body of this death?* Some have thought that the apoſtle here *alludes* to the cruel cuſtom often practiſed by tyrants, of tying dead bodies to thoſe, which are alive. It may be an appoſite alluſion, but it is perhaps too remote.

11. Mr. Locke ſuppoſes, that the apoſtle is not here ſpeaking of the *reſurrection*; but of that *principle of ſpiritual life*, which we receive through the Spirit of God. And this indeed may perhaps be the better ſenſe. There is great force, I think, in what Mr. Locke ſays. He tranſlates ζωοποιησει και, *ſhall quicken even*.

diſſolution:

diſſolution: the ſoul is raiſed to life through the atonement of Chriſt. *His* reſurrection is an earneſt of *yours*.

Be not then, my brethren, alive only to this world. Bury 12. 13.
your ſinful affections, that you may live for ever. None are the 14.
children of God; but they, who are guided by his Spirit. All 15.
ſlaviſh notions in religion are removed. God graciouſly ſtiles himſelf our Father. Let us then be his obedient children; and endeavour to attain that glorious inheritance, which is promiſed to 16. 17.
thoſe, who renounce ſin, and vanity for his ſake; and conſider this world only as a progreſs to the next.

And indeed what is the value of it? What proportion does your 18.
ſhort time here, bear to an eternity of happineſs hereafter——
that great point, to which all the race of mankind have ever 19.
looked up with ſo much anxious expectation? For there has 20.
ever been in mankind, loſt as they are, yet formed originally for immortality, ſome heavenly ſpark of hope; that after throwing off 21.
this fleſhly incumbrance, they ſhould become the partakers of a more glorious ſtate. The blind heathen expected this ſtate, as 22. 23.
well as we, who have the aſſurance of it from God. We all live 24.
in hope. A ſtate of enjoyment, is not the ſtate of this world: 25.
but a religious hope carries us through all it's afflictions. In our 26.
infirmities we pray; and often ignorantly: but the Holy Spirit of God ſuggeſts a language of the heart beyond the power of words 27.
——a language, which He, who ſearcheth the heart, will always graciouſly interpret.

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19. I have applied this, and the following verſes to the heathen world, as Dr. Whitby, and other learned commentators have done. Dr. Doddridge applies them to the whole creation. Either application, I think, makes good ſenſe.

22. There is ſomething very beautiful in thus introducing the whole creation, as if travelling in birth—throwing off the load of nature, and producing a new offſpring from grace.

26. See a note on Luke x. 40.

28. Be aſſured therefore, that in whatever afflictions you may fall, the courſe of this world will always work out good to thoſe, who have been called to the bleſſings of the goſpel; and obey it's pre-
29. cepts. Keep therefore this gracious call, which you have had, continually in your minds. Remember always, that your heavenly Father, with a foreknowledge, that comprehends all events, origi-
30. nally intended you to be partakers of theſe bleſſings. You have been called; and if you obey that call, you ſhall in conſequence be
31. juſtified, and glorified —How then ought theſe things to affect us?
32. If God be with us, what matters it, who is againſt us? He who gave his only Son to die for our ſins, we may reſt aſſured will deny
33. 34. us nothing, that is proper for us —Regard not then the oppoſition of thoſe, who would deprive you of theſe bleſſings. Who is he that condemneth? And who is *He* that juſtifieth? Make the comparison yourſelves; and conſider the love of Chriſt, who died for
35. 36. our ſins, and now maketh interceſſion for us with God. Let nothing then in this world—not even it's moſt formidable terrors,
37. 38. 39. interrupt the joys of religion: but let us triumph over it's afflictions; perſuading ourſelves, that if our own endeavours are not wanting, nothing in this mortal ſtate, neither the fears of death, nor the hopes of life—neither wicked men, nor wicked ſpirits—neither adverſity, nor proſperity, can ſeparate us from the love of God through Chriſt.

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28. The apoſtle here ſeems to addreſs himſelf to the Gentile chriſtian; whom God, in his foreknowledge, decreed, ſhould be called into the church of Chriſt; or, in St. Paul's language, *ſhould be conformed to the image of his Son.* Mr. Parkhurſt has examined all the paſſages, in the New Teſtament in which προορίζω (to *predeſtinate*) occurs. *From a diligent attention to them,* ſays he, *the reader may determine for himſelf, whether in any one of them it has any relation to an abſolute, unconditional predeſtination of particular perſons to eternal ſalvation.* See Park. Lex.

But

CHAP. IX.

But however glorious an event the calling of the Gentiles may be; the rejection of the Jews is certainly a very melancholy one. It oppresses me with sorrow; and I should chearfully devote myself to death, if my sufferings could be of service to that people—once so favoured—in covenant with God—the depositories of his law—and above all, that honoured nation, which hath given birth to the Messiah. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

I mean not however to insinuate, that God had not entirely fulfilled his promises to the Jews. It was never *supposed*, that a bare descent from the patriarchs was the only title of a true Israelite: nor that the promise should extend to the Jews, merely as the children of Abraham. Abraham had many sons: but none of them inherited, except Isaac. *Sarah shall have a son*, are the words of the promise: by which we are taught, that it was not merely a descent from Abraham, that gave a title to it.——The same selection was shewn in the case of Jacob. The national blessings promised to Isaac, were continued to that patriarch in preference to Esau. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13.

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3. The words of the original ηυχομην γαρ αυτος εγω αναθεμα ειναι απο τȣ Χριστȣ, are variously interpreted. Some suppose an exclusion is meant only from the visible church of Christ. Others, among whom is the learned Dr. Whitby, take the words literally, as if the apostle really wished himself accursed; solving the harshness of the supposition, at the same time, by saying, the word ηυχομην signifies, *I could even wish*; that is, *if such a wish could be of any avail.*—Others make απο τȣ Χριστȣ to signify *after the manner of Christ.*—After all, perhaps, as the words contain no doctrine, the apostle had no absolute precise meaning; but only shewed the ardour of his love, by an earnest, hyperbolical mode of speaking.

5. No criticisms on the words of the original Ο ων επι παντων, &c. have been able, I think, to overthrow their force, in proving the divinity of Christ. To give the argument however it's full scope, examine Bowyer's conjectures on the place, who candidly states the authorities, on which the opinions with regard to this text depend.

11. It is plain the *everlasting state* of Jacob and Esau, as *individuals*, is not here even hinted at. The passage plainly alludes to Gen. xxv. 23. *And the Lord, said unto her. Two nations are in thy womb; and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels: and one people shall be stronger, than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.*

What

14. What has the Jew then to object? He was received, as descended from Isaac, in preference to Ishmael: can he then murmur at God's
15. 16. now accepting the *Gentile* on an equality with him? Even his own lawgiver informs him, that God confers national blessings
17. for his own wise reasons, and at his own good pleasure.——Thus also God takes his own time for punishing; as he saith to Pharoah, I have exalted thee, for the very purpose of making thee an instance
18. of my power. Thus God assumes to himself, without explaining his reasons, the power of conferring *national blessings* on some, and making *public examples* of others.

19. You will perhaps then ask, Why God finds fault with the Jewish nation, who only fulfilled his will?

20. 21. Every demand of this kind is impious. Nations in the hands of the Creator, are clay in the hands of the potter. Each vessel receives

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15. Exod. xxxiii. 19.

17. The passage alludes to Exod. ix. 16. which relates both to Pharoah and his people, whom God in that *public manner* plagued for their sins, as it is expressly said, *to make his name to be declared through all the earth.*

17. The word St. Paul uses, is ἐξηγειρα, which, literally no doubt, signifies, as we translate it, *I have raised up:* but I think it may also, without any force, signify, *I have raised thee to thy power*; or I have given *thee thy exaltation.*—The septuagint hath translated the Hebrew of Moses by the word, διατηρηθης; which signifies, *thou hast been preserved*; that is, kept alive under these plagues, for this very purpose.

18. *Whom he will, he hardeneth.* It is evident from the whole Mosaic history, that what God did to Pharoah tended naturally to *soften* him; tho Pharoah like other sinners, turned those means of *softening*, into *hardening:* so that in God's agency here, one step seems to be sunk; and the *hardening* is made God's deed; tho in fact it was Pharoah's. Pharoah was a wicked prince. God did not make him so, that he might be an instance of his power: but being a wicked prince, God made him the *example he intended.*

21. St. Paul's words allude manifestly to a passage of Jeremiah, (xviii. 2.) which greatly illustrates them, as it has a plain reference—not to *individuals*; but to the *whole Jewish nation.* "Arise, and go down to the potter's house. Then I went down to the potter's house, and behold he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay, was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you

receives it's proper form; itſelf uninſtructed in it's maker's purpoſe.

Suppoſe God, to make his indignation againſt ſin the more 22.
exemplary, hath reſerved the impenitent Jews to be puniſhed in
one general, or national rejection: ſuppoſe alſo, that to ſhew the 23. 24.
extent of his grace, he hath taken the Gentiles, as well as us,
who believe, within the covenant of grace; is this more than the 25.
prophet Hoſea expreſsly tells us? *I will call them my people, who*
were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved; that 26.
is, I will form a church among the Gentiles, where formerly it
did not exiſt.——But with regard to the ſalvation of *individuals*, 27.
doth not Iſaiah ſpeak with equal plainneſs? *Tho the people of*
Iſrael be as the ſand of the ſea,—a remnant ſhall be left. The iſſues 28.
of the Lord's wrath, however deciſive they may appear, ſhall overflow
with righteouſneſs. And again, *Except a remnant had been left,* 29.
we ſhould have been utterly deſtroyed like Sodom, and Gomorrha.——
Thus then the Gentiles have obtained juſtification by faith; which 30. 31.
the Jews in vain attempted to obtain by the obſervances of their
law. Salvation through faith in Chriſt, was a ſtumbling block to 32.
them, as the prophet had foretold it ſhould be: *Behold I lay in* 33.

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you as this potter? ſaith the Lord. Behold as the clay is in the potter's hand, ſo are ye in my hand, O houſe of Iſrael.—At what inſtant I ſhall ſpeak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom to pluck up, and to pull down, and to deſtroy it——if it do evil in my ſight, that it obey not my voice; then I will repent of the good wherewith I ſaid I would benefit them."

It is remarkable too, that in the contents prefixed to this chapter in our Engliſh Bible, we are informed, that, *Under the type of a potter, is ſhewed God's abſolute power in diſpoſing of nations:* which plainly ſhews, that the reformers of thoſe days, did not draw this allegory to countenance the doctrine often built on God's foreknowledge.

25. Hoſea i. 10—ii. 23.
27. Iſ. x. 22, 23.
29. Iſ. i. 9.
33. Iſa. viii. 14.—xxviii. 16.

Sion

CHAP. X. *Sion a ſtumbling ſtone, and rock of offence; but whoſoever believeth on him, ſhall not be aſhamed.*

1. And yet I hope, and pray, that God will at length accept this
2. hardened nation; which, after all, it muſt be acknowledged, hath
3. a religious zeal. Ill directed it certainly is. Inſtead of obtaining juſtification in God's way, they attempt it in their own; not
4. conſidering that their law is an introduction only to the goſpel.
5. 6. 7. And indeed unleſs we conſider the language of Moſes himſelf in this light, (as making the law an introduction to the goſpel)
8. 9. 10. it would imply a ſort of contradiction. In one paſſage he ſpeaks of the great difficulty of *obſerving* the law; as when he pronounces a curſe on every man, who does not obey it, in all it's parts. In another, he ſpeaks of the removal of all difficulty; and of the *eaſineſs of performance:* plainly intimating, that the harſh, and impracticable terms of the law, ſhould in time be ſuperſeded by a covenant, which ſhould offer ſalvation on the eaſier terms of faith †.

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† I have endeavoured to give the ſcope of the apoſtle's meaning in this difficult paſſage; in which he applies the words of Moſes, in the 6th, 7th, and 8th verſes, to the goſpel. Whoever compares Deut. xxvii. 26, or Levit. x. 5, with Deut. xxx. 12, 13, 14, which the apoſtle almoſt literally quotes, will ſee that Moſes gives in theſe two ſeveral paſſages, very different repreſentations. In one he ſpeaks of the *difficulty*; in the other of the *eaſineſs* of the law; and the apoſtle ſeems to apply theſe latter paſſages to the goſpel. I dare not however lay much ſtreſs on this interpretation. All I can ſay, is, that I am diſſatisfied with all the interpretations I have ſeen.——A friend gave me the following explication of theſe difficult verſes; of which the reader may judge.

As Moſes warned the Jews not to ſuffer their faith, and practice to languiſh from any pretended obſcurity, which they might ſay, veiled the word of God from their eyes; for it was "nigh them, even in their mouth, and in their heart"——ſo do I, ſays the apoſtle, warn you againſt ſuch infidelity with regard to the acknowledgment of Chriſt. You have ſeen him come down from above—You have ſeen him riſe from the dead. Do not therefore ſay, Who ſhall bring Chriſt from heaven, or who ſhall bring him from the dead? But confeſs with your mouth the Lord Jeſus, and believe in your heart, that God hath raiſed him from the dead.

On

On the whole, the tender of the gospel is universal. God makes 11. 12.
no distinction between Jew, and Gentile; but promises to receive
into favour all, who accept his gracious offer. *Whosoever*, saith 13.
the prophet, *shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved.*

As therefore God meant to make a gracious offer to the Gen- 14. 15.
tiles, the necessity of *preaching* the gospel to them, immediately
appears. And however inadequate the success; yet still, as preach- 16. 17.
ing is the appointed mean, it must of course be every where con- 18.
tinued and extended. Let the Jews therefore recollect some of 19.
the predictions of their prophets on this head. Moses tells them,
they should be moved to jealousy by the nations they despised;—and Isaiah 20.
represents the Almighty discovering himself *to nations, that knew him not*;—*and taxing the Jews with their obstinacy and infidelity.* 21.

We must not however suppose the Jews are totally cast off. CHAP. XI.
God forbid, that I should use such language towards that nation,
with which I must ever consider myself as connected. God, who 1. 2. 3.
foreknows all things, will not intirely cast them off. Elijah formerly cried out, *Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone; and they seek my life also.*
But recollect what answer God returns: *There are yet seven thousand* 4.

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13. Joel ii. 32.

14. The preaching here meant is the *apostolic mode* of preaching, attended by miraculous powers. Preaching the gospel among heathen nations by simple missionaries, without these marks of a divine commission, was what the apostles never attempted. After the gospel was fully established, it appears to have been the design of Providence to bring about the conversion of heathen nations by the gradual progress of civilization; which seems at this time to be working in all parts of the world. Nor is the badness of the instruments, in some parts, any objection: God works with instruments of every kind.

19. Deut. xxxii. 21.

20. Is. lxv. 1.

21. Is. lxv. 2.

3. 1 Kings xix. 14.

4. 1 Kings xix. 18.

5. *in Israel, who have not bowed the knee to Baal.* We consider the
Jews in the same situation now. Tho as a *nation* they are rejected;
6. yet many *individuals* are in a state of grace. But they must ever
remember, that *it is* a state of grace; and that their salvation is
7. not derived from any merit of their own performances. Such
only meet the acceptance of God, whose salvation is derived from
8. 9. 10. Christ. All who reject this mode of salvation, are in that state
of hardened guilt, which the prophet describes by *eyes that see not,*
and ears that hear not; and other circumstances, which denote
11. great perverseness, and infidelity. God forbid however, that we
should consider the Jews as utterly lost. Let us rather hope, that
by the call of the Gentiles, they may in the end be incited to
12. embrace that offer, which they have now rejected. And as their
loss has been a gain to the Gentile world; their recovery will be
13. matter of joy to all christians. I glory in being the apostle of
14. the Gentiles; yet still must I earnestly strive to promote the sal-
15. vation of my own countrymen; and repeat, that their conversion
will be matter of great joy to the whole christian world. The
16. Jewish nation must always be considered as the root, from which
17. christianity springs. You Gentiles are only grafts upon that an-
18. 19. cient stock. From it your nourishment arose. You are ingrafted
20. where the original branches were broken off. Take care therefore,
lest that infidelity, which destroyed them, be not also destructive
21. to you. If the natural branches were not spared; much less rea-
22. 23. son have you to hope, who are only ingrafted.——And now ob-
serve, how amiably, and yet how awfully, the kindness, and se-

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7. So I should explain, what St. Paul here calls *election.*

16. *If the first-fruit be holy, the lump also is holy.* This alludes to the offering of the first-fruits; which made the harvest to be esteemed clean. Thus the apostle considers the Jews as the first-fruits, as it were, of that holiness, which was introduced by christianity. Unless that first-fruit had been holy, neither could the whole body of revealed religion, which was connected with it, have been holy.

verity

verity of God are tempered together—kindneſs to you; and ſeverity to the impenitent Jews. May you both improve under a juſt ſenſe of theſe holy diſpenſations! Take you care, not to change the kindneſs of God into ſeverity: and let them endeavour to avert that ſeverity, and change it into kindneſs. God's mercies will ever be tender towards them. They are the ancient branches; and 24.
may therefore more readily be ingrafted upon their old ſtock.

In the ſpirit of prophecy we foreſee a time, after the converſion of 25. 26. 27.
the Gentile world ſhall be effected, when all Iſrael ſhall be gathered into the fold of Chriſt. Hitherto your obedience hath taken the 28.
place of their infidelity: but God will never forget his covenant with their fathers; nor repent the promiſes he made to their poſ- 29.
terity. Once you were in a ſtate of infidelity; but were enlightened 30.
by them: they are now in that ſtate themſelves; and ſhall hereafter 31.
be enlightened by you. Thus all the world, both Jews, and 32.
Gentiles, each infidel by turns, ſhall finally be the objects of God's mercy.——How wonderful are the effects of his wiſdom, and 33.
knowledge! To us his ways are wholly inſcrutable. It is evident 34. 35.
we are indebted to ourſelves for nothing. To him therefore be 36.
aſcribed, from all his creatures, that glory, which is due for CHAP. XII.
ever! Amen.

Let me exhort you, therefore, my brethren, to live worthy of 1. 2.
this holy call. Whether Jews, or Gentiles, relinquiſh intirely your former rites; and in their room offer to God each his own 3.
body, as a living ſacrifice, cleanſed from the pollutions of the world; and purified by holy affections.——Nor on the other hand, let your ſpiritual endowments create any pride, or jealouſy among you. The church of Chriſt, like the human body, conſiſts of various members; and each member hath it's reſpective uſe. One interprets ſcripture: another bears ſome office in the church: a third is engaged in teach- 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.

ing: a fourth diſtributes the public charity: a fifth takes charge of
9. 10. the ſick, and ſtranger. Whatever the employment be, let undiſ-
ſembled love preſide: and ſhew the ſincerity of that love by your
11. readineſs on all occaſions, to prefer others to yourſelves. Be active
alſo, and vigilant; always remembering that heavenly Maſter, whom
12. you ſerve. Let your future hopes overbalance your preſent diſtreſſes;
13. 14. 15. 16. and let truſt in God, and conſtant prayer be your ſupport. When
a charitable office of any kind is in your power, never fail to perform
it. Prayers, and good wiſhes, at leaſt, are always in your power:
at all times you ought to enter tenderly into the feelings of others:
and let the loweſt of the people engage your attention, as well as
17. 18. 19. the higheſt.——But beware of ſelf-ſufficiency. Let all your dealings
be honeſt, and fair, and open in the ſight of all men. Of malice in
every ſhape diveſt yourſelves. Live peaceably, and inoffenſively
towards all men; and if any man injure you, by no means retaliate.
Return good for evil; and leave your cauſe in the hands of God.
20. 21. Endeavour if poſſible, by acts of kindneſs, to make your enemy a
friend.

CHAP. XIII.

As to the affairs of civil government, the chriſtian religion leaves
them juſt as it found them. It claims no authority in matters of
1. 2. 3. 4. this kind; only in general inculcates the neceſſity of obedience.

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13. The apoſtle *here* mentions hoſpitality, which duly defined, is certainly a virtue *every where*; but in thoſe countries, where places of entertainment were not always to be met with, it was a more neceſſary virtue, than in ſuch a country as this, where many things take the name of *hoſpitality*, which have no pretenſions to it. The apoſtle defines it by the expreſſion, *diſtributing to neceſſity*; which is certainly the only true definition of it. You *give alms*, to thoſe who are in *indigence*; you are *hoſpitable* to thoſe, who, tho not in indigence, are under ſome temporary *neceſſity*, from which you can relieve them.

20. *Heaping coals of fire* is a ſentiment taken from Prov. xxv. 21. St. Auſtin explains it from the idea of melting metal in a furnace: and in the turn of the expreſſion in the 21ſt verſe the apoſtle *ſeems* to have had that idea.

Civil

Civil government is of God's appointment. The conſtitution of this world requires it. It is neceſſary to awe the guilty, and protect the innocent. He therefore who oppoſes civil government, oppoſes God. Let the chriſtian therefore only differ from other ſubjects, 5.
in ſhewing that obedience from *conſcience*, which they ſhew from *fear*†.——Taxes alſo are the neceſſary ſupport of government. Let 6. 7.
theſe, together with a proper reſpect to all in authority, be duly paid. And be aſſured, that he will always be the beſt ſubject, who is the 8. 9. 10.
beſt chriſtian. For that univerſal benevolence, which chriſtianity preſcribes, will the moſt effectually prevent the tranſgreſſion of every law; and of courſe the moſt effectually fulfill it.——We chriſtians 11.
have motives beyond all other people to draw us to our duty. The night of this world is well nigh over. We conſider the day as 12. 13. 14.
beginning to dawn. Let us then lay aſide whatever relates to darkneſs; and make preparation only for the approaching light.

CHAP. XIV.

One point more let me inſiſt on. As the chriſtian church among you conſiſts both of Jewiſh, and Gentile converts, let all unchari- 1. 2. 3. 4.

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† Theſe cautions are chiefly given to the Jewiſh converts, who ſtill thought the *choſen people of God* were ſubject only to his government; and had nothing to do with thoſe of the heathen. The apoſtle's inſtructions therefore reſpect not *this*, or *that mode* of government; but government in *general*; and cannot with any propriety, be brought to ſupport the ſlaviſh doctrines of paſſive obedience, and non-reſiſtance. The chriſtian in his *civil capacity*, like other men, will act as his judgment directs; only his religion, which gives him many new principles, will direct his judgment better; and in this matter, as in all others, will give him more modeſty, and forbearance.

13. Some whimſical interpreters tranſlate κοιταις (which we tranſlate *chambering*) *lying in bed in a morning*. It is certain, if there be no direct precept in ſcripture, to inforce early riſing, it may eaſily be inferred. An hour or two gained in a morning, makes a greater difference in a life-time, than one ſhould eaſily ſuppoſe, without making a calculation.

14. How ſtrongly the apoſtle expreſſes his ſenſe, in ſaying, *Put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. Be ye cloathed as it were with him. Plutarch tells us, that the kings of Perſia always put on, at their coronation, the robe of Cyrus, by way of ſhewing the people, they intended to imitate his virtues.

1. Μη εις διακρισεις διαλογισμων, ſhould be rather *not to form judgments of his thoughts*; than, as our verſion has it, *not to doubtful diſputations*.

table

table animoſities with regard to religious opinions be laid aſide. He, who makes no diſtinction among meats, ought not to deſpiſe him who is more ſcrupulous, and cannot at once lay his ſcruples aſide. He is not accountable to man; and in the ſight of a gracious God, theſe
5. externals are of little conſequence.——Thus again, he who makes no diſtinction among days, ſhould treat his brother, who does
6. 7. 8 9. make a diſtinction, with the ſame forbearance. For I truſt that every one of you, in theſe things, follows the dictates of his conſcience; not acting from any ſiniſter motive; but from a ſenſe of that obligation to religious duty, which the death, and reſurrection
10. 11. 12. of his bleſſed Saviour hath laid upon him.——Lay aſide therefore all uncharitableneſs about theſe indifferent matters; and leave your brother's conduct to the judgment of God, who will call us all to
13. a righteous account. Inſtead therefore of being offended at the con-
14. duct of others, take care to be inoffenſive in your own. I am myſelf perſuaded, that a chriſtian may ſafely eat any kind of food; but he,
15. who is not ſo perſuaded, ought to refrain. And even he, who hath no ſcruple of his own, ought by no means to give offence to him,
16. who hath one; nor ſubject the holy religion he profeſſes, to any
17. uncharitable aſperſion. For tho the ſpirit of the goſpel is little concerned in theſe indifferent matters; yet it is very eſſentially concerned in maintaining peace, and charity, and happineſs among
18. chriſtians. Theſe are the things, which make you uſeful to each
19. other, and acceptable to God.——Cultivate then this peaceable
20. diſpoſition, as the beſt mean of mutual improvement. For however indifferent theſe things may be in themſelves; yet, as he acts wrong,
21. who in the mereſt trifle acts againſt his conſcience; ſo of courſe he acts equally wrong, who thus turns a trifle into a matter of offence.

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3. By *him that eateth*, the apoſtle probably means the leſs ſcrupulous Gentile; and by him that *eateth not*, the more ſcrupulous Jew.

Be

Be ſatisfied then with the liberty you allow yourſelves: only be careful, that religion, and conſcience allow it likewiſe: for in all caſes of this kind, *doubt* is *guilt*. 22. 23.

CHAP. XV.

Nor is it only in the matter of meats, but in every thing elſe, you ſhould be ready to bear with the weakneſſes of others. Remember the bleſſed example of our Saviour. Remember, how particularly marked it is by the prophets for a humble and charitable ſubmiſſion to the weakneſſes of others. Learn then from theſe great characters, thus marked by the prophets, and fulfilled by Chriſt, thoſe principles of chriſtian charity, which are the foundation of all your hopes. And may God Almighty enable you to reduce them to practice; that your petitions to God may aſcend from hearts full of love to each other!——In a word, ſhew that affection to each other, which Chriſt ſhewed to us all. Let the Gentile reſpect the Jew; as Chriſt was in a peculiar manner the Meſſiah of the Jews by fulfilling the predictions of their prophets. And let the Jew reſpect the Gentile; as he equally fulfils the predictions of the ſame prophets; who have with one voice notified his gracious call to the bleſſings of the goſpel.——God grant, that you may all believe the great truths of the goſpel; and rejoice in it's bleſſed hopes, with unanimity, and peace! And tho I doubt not your kindneſs to each other, even among your religious differences; yet as your apoſtle, I thought it right to mention theſe things. Like the prieſt of the Jewiſh law, I conſider myſelf as offering to God the ſacrifice of the Gentile world. But all glorying with regard to myſelf, is totally ſuppreſſed by a ſenſe of God's grace, under which I act. My

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18.

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23. Our tranſlation expreſſes the original too ſtrongly. *He that doubteth, is damned, if he eat.* The apoſtle only means to expreſs the wrongneſs of any action, about which we doubt. *Damned* ſhould be tranſlated *condemned*; or in his own conſcience convicted.

9. 10. 11. 12. The prophecies referred to, which announce the call of the Gentiles, are Pſ. xviii. 49. Deut. xxxii. 43. Pſ. cxvii. 1. Iſa. xi. 10.

own

19. own power is nothing. I act merely by the power of God; which hath enabled me by miracles to ſpread the goſpel through many of
20. 21. the countries of Greece; in all which I have applied myſelf to thoſe only, who had never heard of the goſpel before; that I might take all the labour to myſelf, and according to the prophet, preach to ſuch, as had never been inſtructed.

22. On this account, my deſign of viſiting you hath hitherto been
23. 24. prevented; tho I hope I ſhall ſoon ſee you, as my miniſtry in theſe parts is now finiſhed. I mean to take a journey into Spain; and I propoſe to viſit you in my way thither; both that I may gratify my own affection, and yours; and that I may receive
25. 26. 27. 28. your aſſiſtance in proceeding farther. But I ſhall firſt go to Jeruſalem. The Greek chriſtians have raiſed a contribution for their poor brethren there, and I ſhall go thither to preſent it. When I ſhall have diſpoſed of this charity (if I may call by that name, what, in a ſpiritual light, is indeed rather a debt) I ſhall imme-
29. diately begin my journey to Spain; and I doubt not, but I ſhall have reaſon to meet you in all the fulneſs of apoſtolic love.——

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21. Iſ. lii. 15.

29. Who can help admiring, with what eaſe the holy apoſtle, now advanced in years, talks of travelling, not from one town, or diſtrict to another; but from continent to continent? When St. Paul wrote this epiſtle, he was moſt probably, at Corinth; and propoſed firſt to go to Jeruſalem; and from thence by Rome into Spain. In what way this journey was undertaken, we are not given to underſtand. If the whole of it were performed by ſea; at the loweſt calculation it muſt have extended three thouſand miles: if by land, almoſt double that ſpace. But however performed, we cannot ſuppoſe it to have been very commodious. If we judge from the apoſtle's general account of his travels, the difficulties which he encountered, both by ſea, and land, muſt have been very great. "In journeyings often—in perils of water—in perils of robbers—in perils in the ſea—in perils in the wilderneſs. Thrice I ſuffered ſhipwreck. A day, and a night I have been in the deep. In wearineſs, and painfulneſs—in watchings often—in hunger and thirſt; in cold, and nakedneſs." 2 Cor. xi. 26, &c.

Good God, enable the preſent miniſters of thy word to keep theſe labours of thy holy apoſtle ſo far at leaſt in view, as to prevent their conſidering many things in their profeſſion as inſuperable difficulties, which to him would not have appeared in the light of inconveniences!

In

——In the mean time, my brethren, unite with me in prayer, that I may be protected in all difficulties, and dangers arising from unbelievers—that I may perform my commission acceptably at Jerusalem—and meet you through God's will, in peace and love. And may the God of peace be with you all: Amen. 30. 31. 32. 33.

CHAP. XVI.

I commend to your particular attention the bearer of this epistle, Phœbe, a deaconess of the church of Cenchrea; who hath been of great service to many here; and to myself in particular. I desire also to be remembered, with kind affection, to all the brethren with you, whose various services are highly acceptable to me: and may that affection, which I shew to you, spread equally among yourselves! 1. 2. 3—15. 16.

In the mean time, avoid communication with such persons, as teach any doctrine contrary to what you have received; and let not their interested, and deceitful views impose upon you. The purity of your conversion is every where mentioned; and I hope you will not suffer the artifices of designing men to mislead you. God's Holy Spirit will support your endeavours; and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ever rest upon you!——All the brethren here salute you. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22 23.

May all the earth, Jews, and Gentiles, join in praise to that God, through whose goodness, the predictions of the prophets being all fulfilled, the world is blessed with the gospel of Christ. 24. 25. 26. 27.

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1. Cenchrea was a village near Corinth.

15. In these verses the apostle, with an engaging condescension, enumerates these brethren by name; which must have been a very pleasing remembrance to them; tho to us, at this day, it is less interesting.

16. The *holy kiss* mentioned in this verse was a Jewish custom. It seems to have given early occasion of offence in the christian church; and was therefore laid aside.

25. The word *mystery*, which is used by the apostle in the 25th verse, is generally interpreted to mean, the *calling of the Gentiles*. I think the context requires a more *general* sense; and that the apostle rather means the *whole scheme of the christian religion*.

END OF THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

PREFACE

TO THE FIRST AND SECOND

EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS.

CORINTH was a city of Achaia, ſeated on that neck of land which joined Peloponneſus to the reſt of Greece. It's ſituation, on two ſeas, was well adapted to commerce; and made it one of the wealthieſt cities in the world. But wealth had the effect there; which it always has; and Corinth, as it increaſed in opulence, increaſed alſo in diſſipation, and wickedneſs. To this great city however the labours of St. Paul were directed: and here, amidſt all the profligacy, and corrupt manners of the place, he founded a chriſtian church; and through his influence, drew over many converts to the truth. In compleating this great work he continued at Corinth two years.

Three years after he left it, he wrote the firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, as it is generally ſuppoſed, from Epheſus; the greater part of which appears to be an anſwer to ſeveral queſtions, they had put to him.

The apoſtle firſt expreſſes his happineſs in the general adherence of his converts to their religion, page: 427——he finds fault with their diviſions: 428——gives them a plain idea of the goſpel, oppoſed chiefly to the philoſophy of the world: 428——vindicates his own mode of

preaching it; and ſhews, that a knowledge of it's divine truths can never be attained without the aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God—and that diviſions, and worldly ideas are wholly oppoſite to it: 430——touches on the life of an apoſtle, from which he infers his ſincerity: 434——rebukes them on the account of an inceſtuous perſon, whom he excommunicates; giving them ſome inſtructions with regard to their heathen neighbours: 435——gives them rules with regard to their worldly diſputes: 436——cautions them againſt the vices, and impurities, to which they had been formerly addicted: 437——The apoſtle proceeds next to anſwer ſeveral queſtions, that had been put to him. The firſt relates to marriage; particularly between chriſtians, and heathens. The diſcuſſion of this queſtion is contained in the ſeventh chapter.——In the three next chapters he anſwers a ſecond queſtion; Whether it be lawful for chriſtians to eat meats offered to idols in an idol-temple? He firſt, in the eighth chapter, ſhews the inexpediency of it, as it may miſlead weak chriſtians. In the ninth, he gives an example in himſelf of many things, which he avoids as inexpedient. In the tenth he ſhews how an attachment to theſe idol-feaſts had led the Jews formerly into ſin: they *ſat down to eat and drink*, at the ſacrifices of idols; and then *roſe up to play;* or to commit fornication. He then points out to his converts, that chriſtians might in the ſame way be led from eating in idol-temples, to the practice of heathen abominations. At the fifteenth verſe, the apoſtle uſes a new argument, ſhewing the impropriety of eating in an idol-temple, as the ſign of communicating with an idol, is the ſame as that of communicating with Chriſt; namely eating at his table.——The apoſtle concludes his argument with ſhewing, at the twenty-fifth verſe, in what circumſtances idol-meats may lawfully be eaten.——In the eleventh chapter, two points are diſcuſſed—the firſt relates to the behaviour of women in public aſſemblies:—the ſecond, beginning at the ſeventeenth verſe, to the improper celebration of the Lord's ſupper.——It appears from the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth chapters, that the chiefs of the Corinthian church were ſuffering emulation, and ſtriſe, and vying with each other, to creep in among their ſpiritual labours; and particularly that they were fond of diſplaying the gift of tongues. All theſe improprieties the apoſtle repreſſes.——In the fifteenth chapter, he explains the doctrine of the reſurrection of the dead; on which ſubject many erroneous opinions had

had been entertained among the Corinthian converts.——In the laſt chapter, he gives inſtructions about their collections for the poor; and then concludes.

On the reading of this epiſtle at Corinth, the inceſtuous perſon was excommunicated; and many, from his example, were brought to a ſenſe of their duty. Yet ſtill the apoſtle found oppoſition. He had promiſed, after his journey to Macedonia, to viſit Corinth: but finding the Corinthian converts ſtill in ſuch diſorder, that he could not appear among them, without exerting more ſeverity, than he choſe; he poſtponed his journey. This occaſioned new grounds of oppoſition. The apoſtle was repreſented as an unſteady man.——This was the ſtate of the Corinthian church, when he wrote his ſecond epiſtle, about a year after he had written the former. He introduces it with an account of the ſufferings he had lately undergone; and of his ſincerity in preaching the goſpel: 463——he then gives the reaſon of his writing, inſtead of viſiting them, as he had intended: 464——he forgives the inceſtuous perſon: 465——profeſſes his great affection for his converts: 465——dwells on the difficulty, and yet dignity, of preaching the goſpel; the views, and hopes, and worldly diſtreſſes, that attend it: 466——of the univerſality of the goſpel; and of the ſeeming contradictions, which are reconciled in it: 470——exhorts his converts to ſeparate intirely from all heathen practices: 471——expreſſes his regard for the attention they paid to his laſt epiſtle: 472——reminds them to make collections for the poor; and gives them an account of the diſciples he ſends to them: 473——vindicates himſelf; and ſpeaks of his own labours in the goſpel, and of his power to puniſh his adverſaries, if he pleaſed: 476——raiſes his character among them, by a recital of the viſions he had had: 479——vindicates himſelf ſtill farther; and concludes: 481.

FIRST EPISTLE

TO THE

CORINTHIANS.

CHAP. I.

PAUL, (by the particular appointment of God, an apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt,) together with Soſthenes; to the chriſtian church at Corinth, and to all other chriſtians—grace and peace from God in Chriſt! 1. 2. 3.

Your happy converſion to the chriſtian religion; and your having been ſo bountifully endowed with thoſe gifts, through which your faith was at firſt confirmed, are among the chief ſubjects of my thankfulneſs to God. That communication, which you enjoy, of theſe divine bleſſings, is, I truſt, ſufficient to preſerve you pure unto the great day of our Lord. Be faithful on your parts; and you may be aſſured of the acceptance of that God, who hath called you to ſalvation by his Son. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.

2. The expreſſion, *all that call upon the name of Jeſus Chriſt*, ſeems to point him out as an object of worſhip.

10. 11. But tho in general I thus commend you, I muſt at the ſame time reprove ſeveral of you for the various diviſions, which, I hear, are ſubſiſting among you; and which are very oppoſite to
12. the ſpirit of the goſpel. You are dividing into different ſects—one under Paul—another under Apollos—and a third under Peter.—
13. Do you then ſuppoſe there is any diverſity in the religion of the goſpel? Did Paul die for your ſins? Or were you baptized in
14. 15. 16. his name? As this is the caſe, I am truly glad, that I baptized ſo few among you. Criſpus, and Gaius, and the family of Stephanus, are all that I remember. So that there can be no pretence for ſaying, I baptized in my own name. For I was com-
17. miſſioned not ſo much to baptize; as to preach the goſpel in ſimplicity, and truth.

18. The ſimplicity of the croſs indeed, which hath ever been my ſubject, tho it is the great foundation of all our hopes, is little
19. underſtood by worldly men. To them the prophet alludes, when he ſays; *Behold I will do a marvellous thing among this people. The wiſdom of their wiſe men ſhall periſh; and the underſtanding of their*
20. *prudent men ſhall be hid.*——To what end indeed does the philoſophy, and wiſdom of this world lead us? When it pretends
21. to conduct us in religious matters, it is vanity, and folly. For

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10. The apoſtle paſſes here without any interruption from commendation to blame. His ſenſe is eaſy: but a modern ear requires ſome ſuch connecting ſentence, as I have here introduced.

12. Many commentators ſuppoſe the latter clauſe of the ſentence, *and I of Chriſt*, is an interpolation. The ſenſe is certainly better without it: for all the Corinthian converts, no doubt, liſted *under Chriſt*; but held his doctrines under different leaders.—Mr. Markland, inſtead of Chriſtus, would read Criſpus.

19. Iſa. xxix. 14.

21. This is the ſame ſentiment, on which the apoſtle only dilated more, in the firſt chapter to the Romans.

after

after the world had, through ages, ſhewn it's weakneſs and ignorance in acquiring divine truth; it pleaſed God at once, through the ſimplicity of the goſpel, to diſplay his heavenly wiſdom; and to offer ſalvation to all, who were diſpoſed to receive it. But 22.
the wiſdom of the world, as I obſerved, is little adapted to this divine knowledge. The unbelieving Jew views the Meſſiah only as a temporal prince; and the Greek liſtens merely to ſuch inſtructions, as are decked with the refinements of philoſophy: while the doctrine of the goſpel, which lies in theſe few words, 23. 24.
Chriſt was crucified for ſinners, however offenſive to both; will be found on juſt examination their trueſt wiſdom. For ſimple 25.
as the great deſigns of Providence may appear; the utmoſt wiſdom of man is feeble, when it preſumes to judge of them.—And hence 26. 27. 28.
it is, that ſo few of the philoſophers, and wiſe men of this world, have embraced the goſpel; while through the goodneſs of God, it's great truths are open to men of plain underſtanding, of teach- 29.
able minds, and good diſpoſitions. And this is ordered in ſuch a way, that all the ſerious part of mankind may know, that the hand of man hath had nothing to do in this great work; but that it was planned, and conducted ſolely by God.——You then, 30.
my brethren, giving up the wiſdom of the world, have accepted, through God's goodneſs to you, the wiſdom, the righteouſneſs, the ſanctification, and redemption of Chriſt; and ſhall be among 31.

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22. In the text it is, *the Jews require a ſign*. In our Saviour's time they were always requiring a ſign. And in the time of the apoſtles, it ſeems they were ſtill making the ſame requiſition. What kind of ſigns, they were now in queſt of, their countryman Joſephus tells us. Falſe Chriſts, ſays he, deceived the people by promiſing them σημεια ελευθερίας, *the ſigns of deliverance from the Romans*.

24. The text perhaps applies the *power of God* to the Jews; and *the wiſdom of God* to the Greeks.

27. 28. St. Paul's doctrine here, ſeems the ſame as in Luke viii. 15, *But that on the good ground are they, which in an honeſt, and good heart, having*, &c.

31. Jer. ix. 23, 24.

CHAP. II.

those, of whom the prophet speaks, *Let them that glory, glory in the Lord.*

1. 2. For myself, I ever preached the gospel in it's true simplicity. All the arts of worldly wisdom I have disclaimed. *Jesus Christ,*
3. *crucified for sinners,* has been my constant subject; and I have preached this among you, with all the tenderness, and anxiety,
4. 5. which a serious pastor will always feel. Instead of the arts of philosophy, I have inforced this great doctrine by the demonstration of the Spirit: and have shewn you, that your faith does not rest on any thing human; but on prophecy, and miracles, which
6. are derived from God. The gospel is wisdom indeed; but of a
7. different kind from the perishing wisdom of this world. Tho
8. hid through ages, it was determined from the beginning of the world. But even after it was opened, it escaped the discernment of the Jewish doctors; or they would never have crucified their
9. Messiah.—But it is no wonder; for the divine truths it teaches, are conveyed to us in a manner wholly different from every kind
10. of knowledge, which we receive through our senses—even by
11. the Spirit of God, which alone can fathom his designs. As the spirit of a man only can search the secrets of his own heart; so

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1. *Declaring unto you the testimony of God:* that is, the proof of religion from the prophecies of the Old Testament and from miracles.

2. The idea of a *crucified redeemer,* was the great stumbling-block. On it therefore, as the foundation-stone, the apostle lays the greatest stress. It is said to have given equal offence in China; and some authors relate, that the Jesuit missionaries there finding, how ill it was received, denied that Jesus Christ had been crucified; asserting it was an aspersion of the Jews. This charge against the Jesuits, whether true or not, Archb. Tillotson seems to have believed. See vol. III. p. 284.—The words, και τουτον εσταυρωμενον, might be translated, *even that crucified person.*

9. This passage, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,* &c. is generally applied to the happiness of a future state. It is no doubt a noble description of that happiness, and very applicable to it; but the context here certainly affixes a different sense to it.—It is generally supposed to allude to Is. lxiv. 4. With regard to the difficulties attending this supposition, see Bp. Lowth's note on the passage.

nothing

nothing but God's own Spirit can explain the ways of his providence. This Spirit we have received. From it's influence, not 12. 13.
from worldly ſcience, our knowledge ariſes: and through it we explain the free grace of God—not in the terms of philoſophy; but in the language of the Holy Ghoſt; ſhewing you, that the ſame divine Spirit, which ſpake by the holy prophets of old, now ſpeaks in the goſpel.——But mere unaſſiſted reaſon could never 14.
diſcern theſe things. He only, who is aſſiſted by God's Spirit, 15.
can diſcern them. The mere natural man, continually makes falſe judgments both of men, and things. For as the prophet ſays, *Who hath known the mind of the Lord?* None ſurely, but whom 16.
the Lord hath inſtructed. So none can explain the will of God CHAP. III.
in Chriſt; but ſuch as are under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

But perhaps you may think, I have not opened to you, (as others 1. 2.
have done) the ſublimer doctrines of religion.——You are yet unable to bear them. As the new-born babe cannot be fed with ſtrong food; but muſt at firſt, be ſuſtained with milk; ſo have I been obliged to treat you. You have not yet attained the ſpirit of the 3. 4.
goſpel. Theſe envyings, ſtrifes, and party diviſions among you, under Paul, and Apollos, plainly ſhew, that your converſion is

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15. Solomon's ſentiment is nearly the ſame, as the apoſtle's: *Evil men underſtand not judgment; but they that ſeek the Lord, underſtand all things.* Prov. xxviii. 5.

16. The apoſtle alludes here either to Iſaiah xl. 13, or to Jerem. xxiii. 18.

3. 4. On reading theſe paſſages, we are immediately ſtruck with the ſeeming impropriety of their having received the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, as we find they had; tho they had not yet attained the ſpirit of the goſpel. I reconcile this matter by ſuppoſing, the apoſtle, in different parts of his epiſtles, addreſſes himſelf to different people. Or it might be, that people, who had attained theſe gifts, might fall away, and contract bad habits. We ſuppoſe nobody, in a ſtate of trial, to be, at the ſame time, in a ſtate of confirmed purity. Or what is perhaps ſtill more probable, they might exerciſe their gifts, for the advantage of the church, even tho they had not attained the ſpirit of the goſpel. Balaam exerciſed the functions of a prophet tho a bad man: and we are led to believe, from the tenor of the goſpel, that Judas Iſcariot wrought miracles, as well as the other apoſtles.

not

5. not yet compleat. Are Paul, and Apollos, think you, more than
6. mere miniſters of the goſpel? I firſt planted it among you; and
7. Apollos ſucceeded to my labours: but neither he nor I, are more
8. than mere labourers under God; engaged in the ſame employment;
9. 10. and equally accountable. We are all fellow-workmen: God is our maſter; and you are the land we cultivate: or, to uſe another alluſion, you are the building which I have founded; the ſuper-
11. ſtructure I leave to others. The foundation can be laid only in Chriſt. He who moveth that, engageth intirely in a new building.
12. And as to the ſuperſtructure, whether it be good, or bad, let the
13. workman awfully wait the iſſue of that great day, which ſhall bring
14. his work to the teſt. If it be found ſuitable to the foundation; it
15. is well: he will meet his reward. But if it be found the reverſe, his work periſhes; and he himſelf alſo, unleſs his good intentions may plead to ſave him.

16. Conſider farther, that the chriſtian church is now ſubſtituted in the room of the Jewiſh. *It* is now the temple of God. *Here*
17. God's Holy Spirit reſts, as it did *there*. Conſider then the great danger of injuring the holy temple of God by your diviſions; and reflect, that you yourſelves are now the members, which conſtitute
18. that holy temple. Be not then deceived by the wiſdom of this

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9. Συνεργοι Θεου, rather *fellow-labourers of God's*; than, as it is tranſlated, *labourers together with God.*

13. This is very coldly tranſlated. It ſhould not be *the day*; but *that day*; or *the great day.*—*Fire* ſeems to be conſidered in this paſſage, not in alluſion to any great, eternal fire: but merely as a teſt. As fire is the teſt of gold, ſilver, precious ſtones, wood, hay, ſtubble: ſo the great day will be the teſt of every man's work.

15. St. Jude (ver. 23) uſes the ſame metaphor: *Others ſave with fear, pulling them out of the fire.*

17. The word φθειρει in this verſe is repeated; and is tranſlated firſt *defiled*, and afterwards *deſtroyed*; both which ſenſes it will bear: but to preſerve the figure, it ſhould be confined to one. The idea ſeems to be, that chriſtians, as a body, compoſed the temple of God. Diviſions among them is a diſunion of the parts of the temple. The conſequence is, the deſtruction of the whole.

world

world. He who would reſt his knowledge, on that foundation, 19.
which I have deſcribed, muſt be contented to unlearn much of what
he knows, before he arrive at the ſimplicity of the goſpel; in
compariſon of which the wiſdom of this world is folly. For *the*
wiſe, as we are told, *are taken in their own craftineſs*; and again 20.
the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wiſe, that they are vain.——Let 21.
there be an end therefore of all boaſting, and glorying in this, or
that leader. You have higher aims; all your inſtructors in religion; 22.
all your poſſeſſions in this world, and hopes in the next, ſhould lead
you only to one great point—that holy connection, which you have 23.
with Chriſt; and through him, with God.

CHAP. IV.

Even we, who are the appointed apoſtles of the goſpel, look upon
ourſelves in no higher light, than as the ſtewards of our bleſſed
Lord. For myſelf, if I be found faithful in my office, it is all I 1. 2.
deſire. As to the cenſures paſſed on me by others, they have 3.
little weight with me. I am more inclined to join them in cen-
ſuring myſelf. For tho I am not conſcious of having neglected 4.
my apoſtolic truſt; yet my own ſentiments are no juſtification of my
actions.——Let us not then be forward in paſſing cenſures on each 5.
other: but leave all judgment to that time, when a very different
light ſhall be thrown on the characters of men, from any they
now receive: when the motives of our actions ſhall be examined,
and every man's real deſerts appear in the ſight of God.

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19. See Job v. 13, and Pſ. xciv. 11.

22. With what elevation of faith does the apoſtle here conſider *death* among the *poſſeſſions* of a chriſtian!

23. It is very ſtrong in the original: *Ye are Chriſt's; and Chriſt is God's.*

4. Οὐδὲν ἐμαυτῷ συνοῖδα ſignifies rather *I am not conſcious*; than as it is tranſlated, *I know nothing by myſelf.*

6. Thus I have ſaid what I wiſh to ſay to you on your ſeveral diviſions, and the conſequences of them. I have not mentioned names; but have ſubſtituted my own, and thoſe of Apollos, and Peter; that I might not too openly point at any one; and that your party-leaders may reflect, that if *we* diſclaim any ſeparate authority; much
7. more ſhould *they*. Let them humble themſelves therefore; and conſider the gifts they have received, as given them by God. Sin-
8. cerely do I wiſh thoſe high pretenſions of yours were founded in truth; and that I might change my anxious, ſuffering ſtate for your
9. ſecure, and happy one. Look at us the apoſtles of Chriſt. Who can ſee us in any other light, than as ſpectacles prepared for the
10. ridicule, and cruelty of the world? While we are fools in the general eſtimation of men; you join worldly prudence, and the croſs together: while we are weak; you are ſtrong: while you
11. 12. are honoured; we are deſpiſed. Examine the life of an apoſtle. See the diſtreſſes of all kinds, to which we are expoſed—even to
13. the want of the very neceſſaries of life, which we endeavour to ſupply with the labour of our hands: bearing the many indignities we receive, not only with patience; but with a diſpoſition to return
14. 15. good for evil.——I mention not however theſe things to diſtreſs you: but to revive in you that tenderneſs, which is due from children to a parent. I was the firſt, who opened the goſpel to
16. you: and have certainly the firſt claim to your attention.——And
17. that you may be fully confirmed in that faith, which I once delivered unto you, and preach in all the churches, I ſend my beloved Timothy unto you, with this epiſtle; who is, in all reſpects, a faithful

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6. I have endeavoured to purſue the connection here as well as I could, tho the text is ſomewhat obſcure. As to the ſentence beginning with *and*; that copulative is frequent, when it is merely an expletive.

8. *Reigning as kings* ſeems to refer to the influence theſe leaders had obtained over the people.

miniſter

minister of our blessed Lord. My thus sending a substitute may 18.
contribute to excite divisions still more among you, on a supposition,
that I mean not to come myself. But be assured, I do mean to 19.
come myself; and shall examine, not the philosophy, and worldly
wisdom—but the gospel-spirit, and temper, of such as oppose us.
For it is not the learning of men; but the fruits of the Spirit, that 20.
make the true christian.——You have an option therefore, whether I 21.
shall come among you with the mildness of a father; or with the
power of an apostle.

CHAP. V.

Having thus censured your various divisions, I shall now censure 1.
you still more on another head. I hear there hath been practised
among you a very enormous kind of wickedness; and what is not
heard of even among Gentiles—that one of you hath had a con-
nection with his father's wife; and that others, instead of making 2.
it a general cause of mourning, and separating themselves from
so vile a person; seem rather to defend him in his wickedness.——
Tho absent, I take upon me, through the authority of the Holy 3.
Ghost, to decide in this matter. I command therefore, that, on 4.
the receipt of this epistle, you gather the congregation together;
and in the name of Jesus Christ, solemnly expel this person from 5.
your communion; that he may see the heinousness of his sin, and
after a sincere repentance be restored to God's favour.——As for 6.

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21. The expression, *shall I come unto you with a rod*, is supposed to allude to the exertion of those extraordinary apostolic powers, which were sometimes exercised; as in the death of Ananias, and Sapphira.

1. It appears from many passages of St. Paul's epistles, that the lusts of the flesh (so much practised among the heathen) were among those, on which the purity of the gospel precepts had least effect. At Corinth in particular, the manners of the people were so corrupted, that κορινθιαζειν, was a vulgar expression for leading a loose irregular life. Yet still incest was seldom heard of among the heathen. Cicero somewhere calls it, *scelus incredibile, et inauditum.*

7. 8. your defending him in his wickedneſs, it is an immediate ſtep towards being corrupted yourſelves. You are under a neceſſity therefore on your own account to remove this pernicious example. Conſider your bleſſed Saviour's death, and preſerve yourſelves as free as poſſible from ſin, which was the cauſe of it.

9. But tho I have thus given you ſtrict injunctions not to communicate with any perſon, whoſe life is notoriouſly ſtained with
10. 11. impurities; yet I muſt reſtrict what I ſay, to your own community: for as to your heathen neighbours, many of whoſe lives are thus ſtained, it is impoſſible for you intirely to avoid an intercourſe
12. 13. with them. We muſt leave them therefore to the judgment of God. But over our own brethren we may exerciſe more ſtrictneſs.——I command you therefore once more to excommunicate this wicked perſon.

CHAP. VI.

1. Let me now add another injunction. I greatly diſapprove your carrying diſputes before heathen magiſtrates; and would have you always decide them among themſelves. You have heard what
2. 3. our bleſſed Saviour hath ſaid with regard to his ſaints judging the world. If ſuch honour be aſſigned them, are they not fit, think you, to determine the trifling things of this world? In
4. ſuch matters I ſhould ſuppoſe, that even the meaneſt member of

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7. *Purge out therefore the old leaven.* St. Paul, in this paſſage, alludes to a cuſtom preſcribed by the Jewiſh law (ſee Deut. xvi. 4) of cleanſing their houſes from leaven, before the celebration of the paſſover.

9. The word γραφα here, is thought by many not to refer to any paſt letter; but to the preſent one. St. Chryſoſtom particularly interprets it thus.

2. See a note on Matt. xix. 18, in which I ſuppoſe this expreſſion with regard to judging the world, is figurative. This however hinders not, why St. Paul might not allude to it, as an inforcement of his argument. That the expreſſion is figurative, ſeems plain; becauſe otherwiſe the apoſtle's argument requires us to ſuppoſe that theſe Corinthian converts themſelves, as well as the apoſtles, were to judge the world: *If the world ſhall be judged by* YOU, *are* YE *unworthy to judge the ſmalleſt matters?*

a chriſtian

a chriſtian church might be a ſufficient judge. How ſhameful 5.
therefore is it, that even the wiſeſt among you is not able to decide
a trifling controverſy; but that chriſtians, who ought to give an 6.
example of mildneſs, forbearance, and gentleneſs to others, ſhould
not only quarrel among themſelves; but even carry their diſputes
before heathen judicatories. You muſt ſurely ſee how contrary 7.
this is to real chriſtianity; and that if you fulfilled your profeſſion,
you ought rather to ſuffer an injury, than by ſuch means to re-
dreſs it.

But I fear there is great wrongneſs of practice among you; and 8. 9.
together with the impurities, of which I have juſt been ſpeaking;
there are exceſſes of another kind—covetouſneſs, extortion, and 10.
diſhoneſty, which equally exclude you from all hopes of inherit-
ing the bleſſings of the goſpel. Once, no doubt, many of you 11.
were deeply immerſed in all theſe vices: but you ſhould conſider,
that you have been called to a ſtate of holineſs—and that you
have been baptized, and ſanctified through the Holy Spirit.—
Preſerve yourſelves therefore in that purity; and particularly with 12.
regard to abſtaining from the luſts of the fleſh, uſe ſuch means,
as are moſt conducive to this end. Many things are uſeful in
the degree; but ruinous in the exceſs; eſpecially if they have
any tendency to inſlave the mind. A temperate uſe of food is 13.
highly neceſſary; which, you ſhould always remember, is deſigned
merely for the ends, and purpoſes of this life.——The natural
dignity of the human body alſo, which is created for the Lord,
places the guilt of impure affections in a ſtrong light. The ſame 14.
God, who raiſed up Jeſus from the dead, will raiſe us up alſo.——
We ſhould farther conſider ourſelves as the members of Chriſt. 15. 16. 17.

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12. The connection here is rather difficult. There is not wanting however the authority of commentators for that connection, which I have offered.

Shall

Shall we then pollute the members of Chriſt with deeds of un-
18. 19. cleanneſs?——We ſhould even conſider our bodies as the tem-
ples of the Holy Ghoſt. Let us not then, by polluting them,
20. pollute thoſe temples.——Laſtly, we ſhould conſider ourſelves,
as redeemed, and bought with a price. Let us then, in body
CHAP. VII. and ſpirit, glorify that God, to whom we belong.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. I ſhall proceed now to anſwer the ſeveral queſtions, you have
propoſed.——The firſt relates to marriage; which, in the preſent
ſtate of the church, I ſhould not greatly incourage. To prevent
however ſuch impurities, as are practiſed among the heathen, every
6. 7. 8. 9. one ought to be left at perfect liberty in this matter. I give you
however my own private opinion in adviſing that reſtraint, which
10. 11. I practiſe myſelf.——But with regard to a marriage once entered
into, it is the plain command of our bleſſed Lord, that there ſhall
be no ſeparation, except for the cauſe of adultery. If any ſepa-
ration take place on ſlighter cauſes, and either party marry again,
ſuch a marriage is adultery.

12. 13. 14. 15. 16. But in this new queſtion, which you have put to me, and on
which our Lord hath not given you his injunctions, I will give
you mine. In a marriage between a chriſtian, and a heathen,
if the heathen party wiſh to continue the union, there ought to

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1. This chapter ſeems to relate to queſtions aſked by ſome converts, who had been bred up with an idea of the lawfulneſs of fornication; and who little underſtood the nature of the marriage contract. As it reſpects chiefly the circumſtances of the Corinthian church; and particularly marriage contracts between chriſtians, and heathen, I have contented myſelf with preſerving the apoſtle's general argument.—His reſtriction of marriage, was certainly meant only as a temporary caution; (ſee ver. 26) for St. Paul is otherwiſe an advocate for marriage; and conſiders *forbidding to marry*, as one of the ſigns of hereſy.

15. But tho a ſeparation may take place, I preſume the apoſtle does not authorize a *ſecond marriage*. The reaſon of the ſeparation ſeems to be, leſt the man, or woman, being carried among their heathen relations, ſhould be ſeduced from their religion

be

be no objection on the other ſide: for the religious ſentiments of the chriſtian may draw over the heathen. Beſides, ſuch union affords the beſt hope of bringing up your children in the chriſtian faith. If however, on this religious difference, a ſeparation be choſen by the heathen party, let it take place. Religion is certainly a much more ſacred tie, than marriage. Only let every thing of this kind be accompanied with mildneſs, and tenderneſs.

And here let me remind you of what I have earneſtly taught in all places, where I have planted the goſpel; that the chriſtian religion is intended to make no change in the civil rights, or outward circumſtances of men.—The Jew, and the heathen are equally called: the circumciſion of one, and the uncircumciſion of the other, make no difference.——The maſter and the ſlave are equally called: the bondage of the one, and the freedom of the other, make no difference. If however the ſlave can have his liberty, let him accept it. But even a ſtate of bondage may be endured on chriſtian principles: the maſter ſhould eſteem himſelf Chriſt's bondman, and the ſlave ſhould conſider himſelf as Chriſt's freedman. Whatever your outward circumſtances of life may be; you are all equally bought with a price; and all equally belong to Chriſt. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24.

You will conſider therefore (to return to my ſubject) that I only mean to diſcourage marriage among you, on account of the inexpediency of it, during the preſent diſtreſſed ſtate of the church; and 25. 26. 27. 28.

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23. *Ye are bought with a price, be not ye the ſervants of men.* The apoſtle's argument is, *Ye are bought with a ſtill higher price than your earthly maſter paid for you; conſider yourſelves therefore rather as the ſervants of your heavenly, than of your earthly maſter.*

25. Moſt interpreters make this paragraph the beginning of a new ſubject. To me it appears with moſt force as a repetition of what the apoſtle had ſaid in the 6th, 7th, and 8th verſes of this chapter; with a view to ſum up the whole argument, from the conſideration of the inſtability of human things. The eight verſes therefore, from the 17th, to the 25th, are a digreſſion, addreſſed to a prevailing opinion among the Jews, that the chriſtian religion diſſolved other civil ties, as well as heathen *marriages*.

that

that what I have ſaid on that ſubject, is merely from myſelf, without any expreſs command from the Lord. Let no man conceive me to ſuppoſe any ſinfulneſs in the married ſtate: all I ſay, is, that the times forbode much trouble, and affliction; and on that account
29. 30. 31. I ſpeak merely to your diſcretion, not to your conſciences. The ties, the relations, the joys, the ſorrows, the riches, the poverty, the
32. 33. 34. whole faſhion of this world, will ſoon be over. But during this perſecuted ſtate of the church, a married life muſt occaſion additional diſtraction; and will make it a much greater difficulty, both to
35. the man, and the woman, to attend the affairs of religion.——If however this abſtinence engage any of you in greater difficulties, and temptations, than it removes, my argument at once ceaſes.

36. 37. 38. Under theſe rules alſo let the parents, and guardians of young women act; who cannot ſo well, in theſe caſes, act for themſelves. If they, who are thus intruſted, ſee a proper reaſon for giving their daughters, or wards, in marriage, let them do it: there is certainly no ſin in the caſe. If no ſuch reaſon appear, they will do better at this time, not to incourage theſe connections.

39. 40. Laſtly, with regard to ſecond marriages, the rule ſtill holds. There is certainly no ſin in a ſecond marriage, if the firſt be diſſolved by death. But, as in the former caſe, and for the ſame reaſons I give my adviſe againſt it.——It is true, I ſpeak only my own private judgment in this caſe; but I think I may be conſidered as acting under a ſuperior direction to that of a common adviſer.

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29. Some think the paſſage, contained in the three or four following verſes, was written in the ſpirit of prophecy. The perſecution of Nero ſoon ſucceeded. I rather ſuppoſe the apoſtle's meaning comprehends the general *perſecuted ſtate* of the church, of which our Saviour had given his diſciples ſufficient warning.

39. The expreſſion *only in the Lord* is explained by almoſt all commentators, as a prohibition to marry a heathen. I cannot ſay, it conveys more to me, than that in marriage, as in every thing elſe, we ſhould act under a ſenſe of religion.

I come

CHAP. VIII.

I come now to your next queſtion, *Whether it be lawful for a chriſtian to eat meats offered to an idol, in an idol temple?*——With regard to this matter, I doubt not but you are all ready to profeſs your religious knowledge; not perhaps enough conſidering, that charity is the ſoul of religion—that confidence proceeds from ignorance—and that true religion has no foundation but the love of God, and his commandments.——I doubt not however, but you will all be ready to profeſs, that you know an idol is nothing—that notwithſtanding the diverſity of gods, which are worſhipped around you, you believe only in one God, who made the world; and in one redeemer, Jeſus Chriſt.——At the ſame time, I know well, this eſtabliſhed faith is not univerſal among you. There are ſome, who to this very day have their heathen prejudices ſo far about them, as to partake of meats offered to idols in a religious ſenſe; thus mixing chriſtianity, and idolatry together.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

It is very true, that eating *food of any kind*, is an indifferent matter in the ſight of God. But it is by no means an indifferent matter to *miſlead a weak brother*. Even ſuppoſe it were *allowable* for a *well informed* chriſtian to eat meat ſacrificed in an idol-temple; is there no offence, think you, in encouraging by your practice the doubts of others, who have leſs knowledge than you have? Is there no offence in contradicting the whole ſcheme of your redemption by leading your brother into ſin, from which Chriſt died to

8. 9. 10. 11.

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1. Partaking of the ſacrifices of a heathen temple was a practice ſo convenient to the poor; and ſo agreeable from it's feſtivity, to the rich; that it was not eaſily relinquiſhed. Many of the heathen converts conceived, that as they had no belief in idols, they might partake innocently of theſe ſacrifices.—I add the expreſſion, *in an idol-temple*, becauſe that certainly was the apoſtle's meaning, as appears from the tenth verſe. With regard to the mere meats themſelves, he ſpeaks afterwards. See ch. x. 25.

3. Εγνωσται is here uſed (as St. Paul often uſes Greek words) in a Hebrew ſignification. It does not ſignify, *is known of him*: but, *is made to know him*.

12. redeem him? While you thus mislead your brethren you sin against
13. Christ.——Let it then be your fixed resolution, that, as eating meat in an idol-temple may draw your brother into sin, you will never again allow yourself in that practice.

CHAP. IX. 1. 2. 3. What I have said above against eating meat in an idol-temple proceeds chiefly upon the inexpediency of it. I might strengthen what I have said by my own practice in similar matters. You acknowledge me, for instance, to be an apostle; and if I am not
4. such to others, at least I am to you. I have a right therefore to
5. 6. my maintenance among you. I have a right also to the maintenance of my family, if I chose to have one, as well as Peter, and other
7. apostles. And this I claim on the principles of *nature*—the precepts
8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. of the *law*—and the commands of the *gospel*.——But you see, I wave this right; nor would I, on any account, accept a gratuity from you. It is the only little matter of glorying I have, that I preach the gospel to you without expence. To preach the gospel
16. 17. 18. to you, I am obliged: but that I give up my own advantages, and rights for your sake, is my boast.

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1. The apostle is thought by some to speak, in this chapter, to another question; and at the tenth chapter to resume the argument about idol-meats. I own I list with those interpreters, who consider this chapter as a part of the same argument; and indeed St. Paul at the 23d verse of the tenth chapter, seems to draw it to this conclusion: *Even as I please all men in all things not seeking mine own profit: but the profit of many that they may be saved.* That the argument may appear with more force, I have drawn the heads of it together by abridging, rather than dilating it.

2. He was an apostle particularly to them, because he established the church of Corinth. They were, in fact, as he says, the *seal of his apostleship*.

5. Some commentators conceive the αδελφην γυναικα of the original to be some *attendant female*. In those days, tho there were *inns*, there was no *accommodation*; so that if travellers did not carry people about with them to dress their victuals, they must suffer inconveniences. But the sense I have given, seems the most probable, because of the particular mention of Peter, whom we know to have been a married man. See Matt. viii. 14, and Luke iv. 38.

10. *He that thresheth in hope, should be partaker of his hope.* This passage seems corrupt. In the Alexandrian, and other copies, it is read, ο αλων επ' ελπιδι τε μετεχειν: *he that thresheth, doth it in hope of partaking.*

For

For the ſame reaſon, that I wave this right, I wave a number of 19.
others, for the benefit of thoſe, to whom I preach. As far as I 20. 21.
can with a ſafe conſcience, I become a Jew to the Jews; and a
Gentile to the Gentiles. I put on infirmities with the weak; 22.
and become all things to all men, that I may gain the more; ſub- 23.
mitting thus to many inconveniences for the ſake of the goſpel.— 24. 25. 26.
Conſider again what ſelf-denials even the candidates in your public 27.
games undergo. What eaſe, what comfort do they give up, for the
ſake of worldly glory?—Let us then ſo far follow their example;
ſuffering many inconveniences, that we may procure happineſs to
others, and ſecure it to ourſelves.

Let me place this matter before you in another light; and urge CHAP. X.
you with the example of the ancient Iſraelites. They were governed
by a divine diſpenſation—they were led by a pillar of fire—they 1. 2.
paſſed through the red ſea—they eat bread from heaven—and drank 3. 4.
water, by a miracle from a rock. And yet, favoured as they were, 5.
they incurred God's diſpleaſure; as you certainly will alſo, tho

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25. This is much the ſame doctrine, which our Saviour inculcates in the parable of the unjuſt ſteward (Luke xvi. 8) *The children of this world are wiſer in their generation, than the children of light.*

2. The text ſays, *They were baptized unto Moſes in the cloud, and in the ſea.* This is an expreſſion obſcurely figurative. I know not what ſenſe to affix to it, but that as we accept Chriſt as our lawgiver, through the miracles he wrought; ſo the Jews accepted Moſes.

4. The text ſays, *They drank of that rock that followed them; and that rock was Chriſt*—that is, it was an emblem of Chriſt; which was carried along with them. The metonymy of a *rock* for the *water of the rock*, is eaſy. And the word ακολουθουσης as eaſily admits the ſenſe of *being carried with them.* Ælian exactly uſes it in this ſenſe, where he ſays, that Xerxes carried water with him, drawn from the river Choaſpes, which was the only water the kings of Perſia drank, (ὑδωρ ακολουθει Ξερξη) Hiſt. l. XII. c. 40.—Others are of opinion, that the ſtream, which Moſes ſtruck from the rock, formed itſelf into a rivulet, and accompanied the Iſraelites in their paſſage through the deſert. For the ſake of this advantage, they would naturally keep in that track, or road, through which it led them.

6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. favoured like them, if you follow their bad example; and give yourſelves up to improper indulgences. By frequenting idol-temples, however innocent you may think it, and eating things offered to idols, you may fall by degrees into thoſe vile practices, which occaſioned 12. 13. 14. the deſtruction of the Iſraelites; and will alſo occaſion yours.——Be not then too ſecure from being in covenant with God. Humbly endeavour to avoid temptations, inſtead of running into them by theſe idolatrous practices; and God's grace will help you to overcome the feductions of wicked men, and all other temptations, which unavoidably ſurround you.

15. Let me place this matter before you in a ſtill ſtronger light; hoping that your own reaſon will ſee the force of what I ſay.—— 16. 17. In the inſtitution of the Holy Sacrament, what is held out, think you, among chriſtians by their partaking of the *ſame bread*, and the *ſame cup*, but that communion, which we all profeſs to hold, 1 . both among ourſelves, and with Chriſt?——Thus too in the Jewiſh church, all, who eat at the ſame altar, profeſs themſelves to be 19. 20. of the ſame communion.——Juſt ſo likewiſe, they, who partake of ſacrifices in an idol-temple, give an open declaration ſurely that 21. they hold communion with idolaters. And would you throw ſuch an imputation as this, on yourſelves, and on the holy religion 22. you profeſs?—Provoke not then God with theſe practices; nor enter 23. into conteſt with the Almighty.—It is no excuſe to ſay, that you pay no reſpect to the idol; nor eat the offerings made to it through 24. a religious motive. It is a great evil, if you injure religion by giving offence to others. Every man owes a debt to thoſe around him: nor is it enough to conſult his own good meanings: he

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11. *On whom the ends of the world are come*—that is, to whom God's laſt diſpenſation, the chriſtian religion, has been revealed. The Jews reckoned three ages—the firſt before Moſes—the ſecond after him—and the third after the Meſſiah.

ſhould

ſhould take care alſo, that thoſe meanings be not miſinterpreted by others.

Thus I have given you my opinion at large, with regard to 25.
eating meats offered to idols, in an idol temple; which I totally diſ-
approve.——With regard however to the *meats themſelves*, I am
no way ſcrupulous. They are often, I know, ſold in the markets;
and I have no objection to your purchaſing *them*, or *any* meats
there, without aſking a queſtion: for even idol-meats, when thus 26.
reduced to common uſe, rank again among the other good crea-
tures of God.——Or, if any of you eat with a heathen neighbour; 27.
refuſe nothing, that is ſet before you, on any religious ſcruple.
But if any man inform you, that this, or that kind of meat hath 28. 29. 30.
been offered to an idol, by no means eat; leſt you lead him by
your example to do what is contrary to his conſcience. In other
reſpects, if you eat with thankſgiving, there is no objection.——
Let it be your firſt great rule, to devote yourſelves, and the com- 31.
moneſt actions of your lives, to the glory of God: and let it 32.
come in as a ſecond rule to give no offence to man. This hath 33.
ever been my ſtudy: and as far as I imitate Chriſt, do you imitate CHAP. XI.
me. 1.

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25. As a great part of the ſacrifices were given away, it was cuſtomary for the poorer people to carry their ſhare to the market.

27. It was common alſo among the richer, to carry their ſhares home for family uſes.

28. The expreſſion, *for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulneſs thereof* (taken from Pſ. xxiv. 1.) is given as a reaſon both for *eating*, and for *not eating*. It is *a reaſon for eating*, where your conſcience is not concerned, becauſe all food, in reality belongeth not to the idol; but to the Lord, from whom we receive it. And indeed this is the reaſon, for which it is ſanctified by thankſgiving, becauſe then we acknowledge not the idol; but the Lord for the giver. Again, it is a reaſon for *not eating*; becauſe, where your conſcience is concerned, the creation produces food ſufficient, without uſing any prohibited ſpecies.—Many however think the repetition of theſe words diſturbs the ſenſe ſo much, that they are glad to avail themſelves of the Alexandrian copy, and other copies, in which they are not repeated

I come

2. 3. I come now to your next queſtion; *Whether women aſſiſting in the prayers, and hymns of the church, ſhould keep their veils on?*—— But before I diſcuſs this point, let me tell you, it is a great pleaſure to me, that I am able to commend your obſervance of thoſe *other rules of decency* in your public aſſemblies, which I have already given you.

With regard then to your queſtion, I would have that appearance of regularity, and ſubordination obſerved, which God hath
4. 5. 6. 7. appointed in every thing. A man's appearing in a public aſſembly uncovered; and a woman's appearing veiled, are conſidered as the
8. 9. uſual ſigns of ſuperiority, and ſubjection. As ſuch therefore I injoin them; and would have that natural, and modeſt ſubordination take place, which was firſt pointed out, at the creation
10. of man.——I may add alſo, that there will ever be people at hand, among

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7. The veil was worn in token of ſubjection. See Gen. xxiv. 65. So late in the hiſtory of mankind, as in the time of the Romans, the veil was conſidered in the ſame light. Valerius Maximus (l. VI. c. 3.) ſpeaks of the great harſhneſs of Sulpicius in repudiating his wife, becauſe ſhe appeared in public without a veil. The word *nupta* properly ſignifies *one covered with a veil.*

10. *For this cauſe*, ſays the text, *ought the woman to have power on her head, becauſe of the angels.* This is confeſſedly a very difficult expreſſion; and many ſtrange interpretations have been given of it. The expreſſion, *power on her head*, is not very difficult. Almoſt all interpreters agree in ſuppoſing it to ſignify, *having her head veiled to denote her inferiority.*—The difficulty lies in the reaſon given for her having her head veiled—*becauſe of the angels.*

For one of the moſt *ingenious* explanations of this matter, we are indebted to Dr. Jeremy Taylor, who ſuppoſes (Liberty of proph. ſect. III.) that αγγελω; hath been the miſtake of ſome tranſcriber for αγιλως; and then the ſenſe is, that women ought to wear veils in churches, *becauſe of the aſſemblies of men there preſent.*

But the interpretation I have given, which is authorized by ſome of the moſt learned commentators, is, I think, the beſt. For this interpretation we give the following reaſons.

In the firſt place, it is certain, that unbelievers did come in, as ſpies in chriſtian aſſemblies. See 1 Cor. xiv. 23, 24, 25. And particularly Galat. ii. 4.

In

among the enemies of religion as ſpies upon you, to obſerve, and mark any impropriety, or indecency in your behaviour.——What 11. 12.
I ſay however on this ſubject muſt not be underſtood as countenancing any undue authority in the man; or any ſlaviſh ſubjection in the woman: for men and women were created for each other; and for their mutual comfort, and aſſiſtance.

But beſides it's betokening a proper ſuborination, there is a *natural* 13. 14. 15.
decency in a woman's appearing veiled in a public aſſembly. Even the long hair, which nature hath given her, evidently ſhews the intention of nature: and you would all ſee an impropriety, if the ſexes ſhould change the uſual diſtinction; if the man ſhould wear his hair long; while the woman ſhould wear hers ſhort.——After 16.
all I have ſaid, if any are ſtill unconvinced, I have only to add, that the practice, I have here preſcribed to you, is the practice of all the chriſtian churches I am acquainted with.

I come now to a point, in which there is great cauſe for finding 17.
fault—I mean the irregularity, that attends your aſſemblies at the celebration of the Lord's ſupper.——In the firſt place, I hear 18.
there are great diviſions among you, on this ſubject, and party-

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In the ſecond place, the word αγγελος which literally ſignifies a *meſſenger*, as well as an *angel*, is ſometimes alſo uſed to denote a *ſpy*. Thus in James ii. 25, υποδεξαμενη τους αγγελους ſhe received the *meſſengers*; which *meſſengers*, we know were *ſpies*; and were the *very ſame perſons*, whom St. Paul (Heb. xi. 31) calls by their proper name, κατασκοποι, *ſpies*.

In the ſeptuagint alſo, the word αγγελος is uſed in this ſenſe.

It is happy however, that this very difficult text is of no great conſequence to *us*. Theſe injunctions of St. Paul with regard to women, muſt be conſidered as *local* only; alluding to cuſtoms then prevailing at Corinth. All the inſtruction, that we are to draw from them is, that every thing in our religious aſſemblies, ſhould be conducted with regularity, order, and ſubordination.

15. Some commentators think the apoſtle's interdiction of diſhevelled hair, and his injunction to wear veils, was to obviate all ſimilitude between chriſtian women, and heathen prieſteſſes.

diſtinctions;

19. diſtinctions; which I rather believe. Such indeed is the conſti-
tution of this world, that there always muſt be a difference of
opinion among men; which will act as a kind of teſt of their
20. wiſdom, and prudence.—But here is an evident fault, not merely
in matters of opinion, but in practice. Indeed, my brethren,
your general manner of aſſembling is very far from the ſimple in-
21. ſtitution of our Lord. You make a *common contribution* of food
in your love-feaſts, it is true: but how is it diſpoſed of? The
richer form into parties; and taking their own proviſions, eat and
drink to exceſs: while the poorer, inſtead of finding comfort from
the abundance of their richer neighbours, are left to ſtarve. This
22. is turning the church of God into an eating-houſe; and the ſa-
crament into a riotous meal; and calls for a very ſevere reprehen-
ſion.

23. 24. In oppoſition to this, conſider the ſimple inſtitution of the Holy
Sacrament, as injoined by our Lord; and as you have been taught
by me. Sitting with his diſciples at the paſchal ſupper, that
night, in which he was betrayed, the holy Jeſus took bread, and
bleſſing it, brake, and gave it among them, bidding them eat
it, in remembrance of his body, that was broken for them. In
25. the ſame manner he diſtributed the cup in remembrance of his
26. blood, that was ſhed: and inſtituted this plain, eaſy rite to be
a *viſible record*, as it were, through all ages, of his meritorious
death.

27. It is a great profanation therefore of this ſacred rite, to cele-
brate it in the riotous aſſemblies, I have been juſt deſcribing.

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21. I take it for granted, that the apoſtle alludes here to what were called love-feaſts; as we read of no other occaſion, on which they contributed to a common-meal.

26. *Ye ſhew forth the Lord's death.* This ſeems to allude to the *Haggadah*, or *ſhewing forth*, in the *paſſover*. Some youth was appointed to aſk the reaſon of the rite? Then ſome grave perſon preſent was appointed to *ſhew it forth*.

Examine

Examine then the purpoſes for which it was inſtituted; and judge from thence of the temper, and behaviour, with which you ought to receive it. For you may be aſſured, that this unworthy manner of receiving it will, in ſome ſhape or other, provoke God's indignation againſt you. Let thoſe therefore who have not yet felt the hand of God, prevent it by looking into their own behaviour; and let thoſe, who now lie under God's judgments, conſider them as the providential means of their reſtoration to his favour. Let every circumſtance of decency and order attend this ſolemn inſtitution: but for the future, let no common meal accompany it.——Other things with regard to this point, I will give orders about, when I viſit you.

28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34.

CHAP. XII. 1.

Your next queſtion with regard to *ſpiritual endowments*, leads me into a longer inquiry. I ſhall endeavour to explain it fully to you.—

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28. An excellent rule, ſomething like this, is given Eccleſ. xviii. 23. *Before thou prayeſt, prepare thyſelf.*

30. The apoſtle mentions the infliction of diſeaſes, and death. Theſe temporal puniſhments ſeem to have been inflicted, tho uncommonly, in the early church; but we muſt always conſider them as inflicted by God. The apoſtles were only God's inſtruments.—Some indeed ſuppoſe the apoſtle is deſcribing here only the common effects of intemperance.

31. I explain διακρινειν by the expreſſion, *looking into their own behaviour.* Διακρινω does not ſignify *to judge*; but *to examine,*

32. *Chaſtned,* is a good tranſlation of παιδευομεθα, which ſignifies properly *to be corrected, as children.*

34. This verſe appears to be the prohibition not only of the *irregularity* of love-feaſts, but of *love-feaſts themſelves.* They certainly began early to be very diſorderly aſſemblies; and were early aboliſhed. Traces of them may be found later in the church: but this does not diſprove the apoſtle's prohibition of them at Corinth, where they had ariſen to ſo great a height of diſorder.

1. Theſe were the ſeveral powers, which it pleaſed God to commit to the early chriſtians for the propagation of the goſpel. In the practice of a good life, we are every where aſſured that the Holy Spirit of God will aſſiſt our pious endeavours. But the apoſtle here ſpeaks of thoſe ſpecial gifts, which were intruſted to the firſt chriſtians; and which ceaſed after the firſt age. The exact knowledge therefore of this queſtion, is of leſs concern to us.

2. In the firſt place, that you may not be exalted with theſe ſpiritual endowments, remember how lately you were all ſunk in the impu-
3. rities of idolatry.——Let me next remind you, that as theſe endowments were given by the Spirit of God, merely to ſupport that goſpel which through it was revealed, they all iſſue from the ſame ſource; and are ſo far on an equality. There ought therefore to be no
4. 5. 6. 7. conteſt among you about pre-eminence. Be aſſured, that whatever gifts or endowments of any kind, you are poſſeſſed of, notwith-
8. ſtanding their variety,—ſupernatural knowledge, and wiſdom—
9. 10. eminent degrees of faith—a power of working miracles—the gift
11. of prophecy—the ability of detecting falſhood—ſpeaking in different languages—all proceed from the ſame Spirit, who diſtributes
12. them ſeverally to each as He pleaſes. The church of Chriſt therefore,
13. like the human body, is made up of various members. Be they Jews, or Gentiles, bound, or free, yet after they are baptized into the chriſtian profeſſion, they become all united by the ſame Spirit;
14. 15. 16. as the natural body is by the ſame ſoul. So that when chriſtians, poſſeſſing various gifts, have any animoſity in point of pre-eminence, it is, as if the hand, or the foot, or any other member, ſhould take
17. 18. offence at the reſt. All are neceſſary—all contribute to the general
19. good of the whole—without any one of them, the body would be
20. 21. imperfect: while their union makes it compleat. No one part can
22. 23. 24. ſay of any other, that it is unneceſſary. Even the weakeſt, and
25. 26. leaſt diſtinguiſhed parts, as well as the nobler, have their uſe. So that the body, and it's members being all at union, no part can ſuffer without injury to the reſt; nor can any part enjoy eaſe, unleſs the reſt partake of it.

27. 28. 29. Under this compariſon I would have you conſider the church of
30. 31. Chriſt, conſiſting of apoſtles, prophets, teachers, and all it's other

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3. For the interpretation of this verſe, I am chiefly indebted to Mr. Lock.

27. Σωμα Χριστου, και μελη εκ μερους: *Ye are, in ſome ſort, the body and members of Chriſt.*

members,

members, compoſing one uniform, and connected whole. Without this ſubordination no ſociety can exiſt: and tho all cannot attain the higheſt endowments: yet let all deſire them earneſtly, and endeavour to deſerve them. By emulating each other, as you do, you certainly ſhew you have not yet attained, what is beyond them all, a right idea of chriſtian love. Tho a perſon were poſſeſſed of every ſpiritual attainment—tho he could ſpeak the language of angels—tho he were endowed with the gift of prophecy—tho he underſtood the whole myſtery of the redemption of man—and was actuated by a faith that could work the greateſt miracles,—tho his *actions* were as ſplendid as his *endowments*—tho he gave his whole poſſeſſions to the poor; and ſubmitted his body even to martyrdom itſelf—yet ſtill, if theſe endowments, and theſe actions, can be ſuppoſed to exiſt without chriſtian love, they would be of no avail.

CHAP. XIII. 1. 2. 3.

He, whoſe heart is warmed by this principle, is gentle, and kind to all. He is free from envy, pride, and vanity. No improper behaviour is ſeen in him. He never ſeeks his own private advantage, when it interferes with the good of others. He is patient of injury; and the laſt to put an unfavourable conſtruction on the meanings of others. Nothing that hurts another, gives pleaſure to him. Nothing, but what, in ſome reſpect ſerves the intereſt of religion, gives him real joy. His life is a conſtant courſe of oppoſition to his bad inclinations. He bears with the humours of thoſe he converſes with; ſeeking to hide, rather than expoſe them. He allows not himſelf to believe the ſlanders, which he hears—and preſerves his good opinion of others, as long as he poſſibly can.——Conſider alſo, that as chriſtian love *excels* all ſpiritual attainments, it *outlaſts* them alſo. Prophecies ſhall be fulfilled—languages ſhall become unneceſſary—and ſpiritual knowledge (here ſo imperfect) ſhall vaniſh in it's future completion: but love ſhall continue with us to all eternity. In the preſent life, as we advance in years, and become

4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11.

12. 13. more informed, our views are continually changing. In the ſame way, when we compare this world with the next, we may be ſaid here to ſee only through faith, and hope. But hereafter, when we ſhall be removed to perfect viſion, the objects of faith and hope being obtained, we ſhall ſtill find love, the great ſource of all our future enjoyments.

CHAP. XIV.

1. 2. As far then, as you act under the influence of this great principle, you may deſire ſpiritual gifts: but I ſhould wiſh you chiefly to expound, and inſtruct. For he, who ſpeaketh in an unknown tongue, may
3. ſpeak indeed to God; but ſpeaks to no purpoſe to his hearers: while he who plainly expounds ſcripture; edifies, exhorts, and comforts
4. all, who hear him; and ſpreads knowledge abroad in the church.
5. For myſelf, I rejoice in every gift, you poſſeſs; particularly in the power given you of ſpeaking languages. At the ſame time, I muſt ſay, that unleſs he, who ſpeaks in an unknown language, interpret
6. alſo; the expounder is certainly the more uſeful ſpeaker. If I neither make the revelation, nor the doctrine intelligible; what
7. 8. end does my ſpeaking anſwer? If the trumpet, gives no diſtinction
9. of ſound, how ſhall the ſoldier be directed? Juſt ſo, if your diſcourſe is no addreſs to the underſtanding, what is it's effect? God
10. hath given the bleſſing of languages to mankind to communicate
11. their ſentiments: without this uſe, language is nothing. Let me
12. 13. then repeat what I ſaid before, that as you are zealous of your ſpiritual gifts, I would have you make them anſwer the great purpoſe, for which they were intended—the edification of the church. Let none of you therefore ſpeak in an unknown tongue; unleſs what he ſays, is interpreted either by himſelf, or others.

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6. The apoſtle uſes four words, *revelation*, *knowledge*, *prophefying*, and *doctrine*. We may not perhaps be able with ſufficient accuracy to diſtinguiſh the preciſe meaning of each: it is enough however for our purpoſe at preſent, that the apoſtle's general meaning is, that in whatever way we endeavour to inſtruct, it is to no purpoſe, unleſs we make our meaning intelligible.

The

The ſame rule holds equally in public prayer, as in preaching. 14.
If I pray in an unknown tongue, my own devotion may be pure; but I cannot lead the devotion of others. All prayers therefore, 15.
and ſpiritual hymns, ſhould not only be devout; but addreſſed to the underſtanding alſo. Otherwiſe, tho your prayers in themſelves 16. 17.
may be excellent, it is impoſſible that the congregation can unite in them.—For myſelf, tho the gift of tongues is imparted to me in 18. 19.
full meaſure, my chief employment hath been expounding.——Be not then carried away, like children, by novelties: but like men 20.
uſe your underſtanding; and conſider the end, for which the gift of tongues was imparted. You remember the early prediction of 21.
this great gift, *With other tongues, and other lips, will I ſpeak unto this people; and yet they will not hear.* To ſpeak in an unknown 22.
tongue therefore, you ſee, may be a miracle, to *convert unbelievers.* But to thoſe, who *believe,* expounding is the proper application.
Unknown languages uſed incautiouſly, will diſcredit religion, inſtead 23.
of aiding it. What, think you, would an unbeliever ſuppoſe, if he ſhould enter your aſſemblies, and find a perſon talking to the congregation in a language, which none of them underſtood? This would rather make him ſuppoſe, you were mad, than inſpired.
But if he ſhould hear any of your teachers *expounding*; a different 24.
effect might then be expected. He might ſee his error; his con- 25.
ſcience might take alarm; and falling down on his knees, he might worſhip God among you.——In concluſion, my brethren, when 26.
you come together, and every man hath his peculiar gift, let each be exerciſed with decency, and order; and with a view merely to the inſtruction of your congregation.

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21. Iſa. xxviii. 11, 12.

26. The texture of this verſe ſeems to imply, that when they all came together, each with his particular gift, they were not ſo much concerned about edifying the church, as they were eager and contentious to diſplay their ſeveral talents.

The

27. The following rules may direct you.——Let not above two, or three at most, speak before one assembly, in an unknown tongue; and that in order; and let what is said, always be interpreted:
28. without an interpretation let no unknown tongue be used.——Let
29. the teacher, and expounder observe the same rule. Two or three are as many as I would have speak at one meeting. Let others sit by; and only approve, or disapprove the passages expounded.——
30. 31. Tho another should be more informed on a subject, than he who is speaking; yet let him not speak, till the first hath finished his
32. discourse. Decency, and order require this rule. The inspiration of a christian teacher is not like the wild ungoverned fury of a
33. heathen priest: yours is subject to restraint; as coming from that God, who is the author of peace, and order. I must add also, that this is the constant practice of all christian churches.——I
34. 35. would not have women ask questions, and put their difficulties in public. It is unbecoming. Let them ask their husbands
36. at home. Let these instructions be carefully observed; and let

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27. Why *any one* should be allowed to speak at all in an *unknown tongue* among believers of the same country, is difficult to conceive. It might perhaps be to examine their gifts; or as a proof perhaps to the congregation, that they possessed them. Or there might be persons of different countries present. Against any inconvenience however arising from the exercise of them the apostle sufficiently guards.

30. Our translation of this verse (which is literal,) *seems to imply* a contrary sense: but the context, I think, plainly shews this to be the true sense.

34. I am rather inclined to think, that in this instruction about women, no *public teaching* was *supposed:* but that it was meant to forbid women to ask questions, and raise difficulties, and scruples at church; which would tend to disturb the congregation. Inspired women, no doubt, had often taught in churches; and might teach. Anna the prophetess was an instance. Philip's four daughters (Acts xxi. 9) were other instances. And St. Paul himself (1 Cor. xi. 5) seems to allow it; notwithstanding all that is said to reconcile that text with this. I cannot therefore suppose, that St. Paul here absolutely forbids women to speak in the church. But their asking questions continually might have been a very disorderly thing; and have come to such a height, that the apostlemight think fit to repress it.

the

the Corinthian church remember, that it was not among the firſt converted; and ought not therefore to conſider itſelf as a model to others. But let all your teachers conform to the advice I have 37.
given them, as the advice of an apoſtle of Chriſt. The obſtinate 38.
muſt take their courſe.

You ſee my admonitions have two great points in view. The 39.
firſt is, that the gift of tongues may be uſed diſcretely; and the ſtreſs laid on *expounding*; which tends more to edify the church. ——The ſecond, that all your public ſervices may be performed 40.
with decency, and order †.

CHAP. XV.

I come now to that great article of your faith; and ground-work 1. 2. 3. 4.
of your hopes—the reſurrection of the dead.——It hath been the conſtant ſubject of my preaching to you, that Jeſus Chriſt, according to the whole tenor of prophecy, died for our ſins; was buried; and roſe again.——I have repeated to you alſo, the evi- 5. 6. 7.
dence, on which this laſt great fact is founded—that he was ſeen, after his reſurrection, by Peter, James, and the other apoſtles at different times—and at one time, by above five hundred people together, moſt of whom are at this day living witneſſes of this

† Chap. xiv. Tho the gift of tongues hath ceaſed amongſt us, this chapter is an admirable piece of inſtruction to the clergy of any country—eſpecially to the young clergy; who are often not attentive enough to accommodate themſelves to their hearers. What matters it, tho they ſpeak neither in Greek nor in Latin, if they treat ſubjects, or uſe words, and phraſes, which the people do not underſtand—And if they do this to ſhew their parts, and learning; they fall *directly* into the fault which the apoſtle here reproves—that of oſtentatiouſly diſplaying their gifts. If they would wiſh to preach for the ſake of edifying, they cannot poſſibly uſe words of too eaſy a ſignification: for they who have been moſt converſant with low people, know beſt the ſhort extent of their ideas.

4. It appears, that many of the Corinthian converts diſbelieved the reſurrection of the dead, (ſee ver. 12) and others probably held very doubtful opinions about it from hearing it conſtantly ridiculed by the heathen philoſophers, ſome of whom uſed to call it *the hope of worms*.

wonderful

8. 9. wonderful event.——To this abundant evidence, I might add my own teſtimony. Tho inferior to the reſt of the apoſtles, becauſe I was a perſecutor of the church of God, and like one born out of due time, yet was I at length favoured with a ſight of my Sa-
10. viour; and by the grace of God, however unworthy, I am what I am. Nor was his grace beſtowed on me in vain. Through it's bleſſed influence my labours in the goſpel have been unceaſing.
11. I mean not however to depreciate the labours of other apoſtles. We all unite in one work. We preach, and you believe, that one great doctrine, the reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead.

12. But now if *Chriſt's reſurrection* be thus confirmed, whence is
13. it that any of you can doubt his *own?* Your reſurrection is in-
14. ſeparably connected with *Chriſt*'s. If Chriſt did not riſe, *your*
15. 16. *faith* is vain; and likewiſe *our preaching*. Inſtead of apoſtles, we are falſe witneſſes, teſtifying the reſurrection of Chriſt, which is void of all truth; unleſs *his* reſurrection inſure *ours*. If Chriſt
17. did *not* riſe, our faith is groundleſs; we are yet in our ſins; and
18. all the hopes of thoſe, who ſleep in Chriſt, are periſhed. Hard
19. indeed would then be the chriſtian's lot; who gives up every thing here, and has nothing to expect hereafter.

20. Be not however miſled by theſe falſe opinions. Chriſt is cer-
21. 22. tainly riſen; and inſures the reſurrection of all his followers. As ſurely as Adam brought death into the world; ſo ſurely hath
23. Chriſt reſtored us to life: and in a natural order, riſing firſt himſelf, he enables us to follow him.

24. 25. 26. Then ſhall be accompliſhed the great end of the Meſſiah's kingdom, when all his enemies ſhall be ſubdued; the laſt of which
27. is death. After this great ſubjection of every thing to Chriſt, ex-

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20. *And became the firſt-fruits of them, that ſleep.* This is a beautiful alluſion to the firſt-fruits under the law, which ſanctified the harveſt.

cept

cept the Creator himſelf, hath taken place; then the Meſſiah, 28.
depoſiting his mediatorial office, ſhall be united fully with God.

But at preſent we have to do only with the reſurrection of the 29.
dead. If we believe not this article, how abſurd is it to embrace
a religion, which injoins us to be dead to every thing in this 30. 31. 32.
world. Equally ſo are the dangers, and death, of which we
daily run the riſk. Inſtead of this, it were better at once to
adopt the epicurean maxim, *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow
we die.*——Take care however not to be miſled by theſe corrupt 33. 34.
notions; which can indeed only miſlead thoſe, (I hope there are
none ſuch among you) who have no knowledge of God.

But perhaps ſome of your philoſophical teachers may urge the 35.
improbabilty of a reſurrection, from their not being able to comprehend it.

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28. This is one of thoſe paſſages, on which the Arian builds; and no doubt, it is a great difficulty. I think however it will bear, without any forced interpretation, the ſenſe here given. I know not what more conſiſtent ſenſe can be put on that awfully obſcure expreſſion, *that God may be all in all.* Our Saviour is repreſented in ſcripture, as ſitting at the right hand of God, and making interceſſion for us. Till the concluſion of this world therefore his *mediatorial office* continues. Time is nothing with him, with whom a thouſand years are but as one day. When this great event, the concluſion of all things, ſhall take place, then God, and Chriſt become one.—But I give this ſolution, which is yet authorized by good commentators, with great diffidence and humility. It is a ſubject we muſt not pretend to comprehend.

29. It appears, that the apoſtle having given a ſhort ſketch of the completion of the Meſſiah's kingdom, to which the reſurrection of the dead led him, returns again to that point.—Being *baptized for the dead* may ſignify, as ſome ſuppoſe, ſuffering martyrdom: as our Saviour, a little before his death, ſays, *I have a baptiſm to be baptized with*; and in other places to the ſame effect: but the ſenſe I have given ſeems to me the moſt conſiſtent. The argument is, what ſhall they do, who give up all the pleaſures of this world, if there be no other.

31. *I proteſt by your rejoicing* is only a mode of aſſeveration: I proteſt by your joy in the mercies of Chriſt.

32. *Fought with beaſts at Epheſus.* Some ſuppoſe this is literally ſpoken. But others, who conſider that St. Paul, as a Roman citizen, was exempted from ſuch a puniſhment, ſuppoſe he meant the violent conteſt he had with furious, and wicked men.—The expreſſion will be eaſy, if we change the tenſe, and tranſlate the original, *if I had fought*, inſtead of, *if I have fought.*

36. Can they comprehend the growth of a ſeed? Does it not die,
37. before it riſes? Does not a different body riſe (be it of whatever
38. grain) from what is ſown? And is not the ſame almighty power which raiſes corn from the ſeed, able alſo to raiſe a human body
39. from the duſt? Why ſhould it ſeem at all improbable, that God ſhould be able from one body to produce another? With what a number of bodies, from men to inſects, is the world repleniſhed? How great the difference among them? Yet whence were all pro-
40. 41. duced? Take the heavenly bodies alſo into the account—the ſun—the moon—the ſtars: what a variety of ſplendor do they exhibit? And
42. 43. yet of what were they compoſed?——Under this idea conſider the reſurrection of the dead. Is it more incomprehenſible, that a glorious immortal body ſhould ariſe from a maſs of corruption; than that all this vaſt variety of beautiful forms, and ſplendid bodies, ſhould ariſe from nothing?

44. But you are led into this prejudice by the weakneſſes, and imperfections of a natural body; not conſidering that it is juſt as eaſy for an almighty God to form a ſpiritual body, as to form a natural
45. one; and that this ſpiritual body may be inherited in the ſame way,
46. from Chriſt; as the natural body is from Adam. The natural
47. 48. 49. body preceedes the ſpiritual body. And as our firſt body partakes of all the qualities of it's earthly parentage; our ſecond body, depoſiting all it's weakneſs, and infirmities, ſhall be arrayed in all
50. the glorious qualities of it's heavenly one. Fleſh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Corruption cannot inherit incor-

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36. Some object, that if the ſeed die, it never riſes. But in fact, it does die: it is only the germen, or bud, that ſprings up; the body of the ſeed firſt feeds this bud; and then turns to corruption.

42. The apoſtle ſeems to confine what he ſays here, to the reſurrection of the *pious* dead; which is all at preſent that his diſcourſe led him to. The wicked muſt look into other parts of ſcripture for their doom.

ruption.

ruption. But when that great change, of which we have yet no 51.
conception, ſhall take place—when the awful voice of God ſhall 52.
call the dead from the grave; when this corruptible ſhall have put 53. 54.
on incorruption, and this mortal ſhall have put on immortality;
then ſhall the words of the prophet be fulfilled, *Death is ſwallowed up in victory.* Then may all the holy diſciples of Chriſt join in
that triumphant ſong, founded alſo in prophecy, *O Death, where* 55.
is thy ſting? O Grave, where is thy victory?—Under the law indeed, 56.
inforcing ſinleſs obedience, death was a fearful event; for we have
all ſinned, and made ourſelves obnoxious to it. But thanks be to 57.
God in Chriſt, we are now under a law, which enables us to
perform what it injoins; and to avoid what it threatens. We have
now the full means of victory over death, and the grave.

Let us not then, my brethren, be wanting to ourſelves. Let us 58.
be ſteady in our faith; and in the conſcientious diſcharge of a holy
life; aſſuring ourſelves, that on theſe conditions, our hopes in the
goſpel ſhall never be in vain.

With regard to the laſt object of your inquiry, making *collections* CHAP. XVI.
for the poor, I ſhall juſt give you the ſame inſtruction, which I
have given to the churches of Galatia; and that is, that each of 1. 2.
you ſhould lay by a portion, at the beginning of every week for
this ſervice, as God hath proſpered him; that when I come, all
may be in readineſs. At that time, I will appoint whomſoever 3.
you ſhall approve, to carry your liberality to Jeruſalem; and will 4.
myſelf attend them, if it be neceſſary.——I propoſe ſoon to viſit 5. 6. 7.
Macedonia: but I mean not to take you in my way; as I ſhould
rather wiſh to defer my journey to Corinth, till I can ſtay a longer

54. Iſa. xxv. 8.
55. Hoſea xiii. 14.

time. Probably I may winter with you; and ſhall then accept
8. your aſſiſtance in the farther proſecution of my deſign. Till after
9. Pentecoſt however I ſhall continue at Epheſus, where I have a
wide field before me; tho I meet with much oppoſition.——If
10. 11. Timothy come to you, treat him with affection, and reſpect;
12. and aſſiſt him, in his journey to me. I ſhall expect him ſoon,
with the brethren, who are with him.——I could have wiſhed that
Apollos had viſited you at this time: but he ſeemed rather deſirous
to defer his journey, till a more convenient opportunity.

13. And now, my brethren, I beſeech you to exert yourſelves; and
14. maintain that courage, and conſtancy in your profeſſion, which
become chriſtians. Above all things, let there be no animoſity,
nor diſſention among you in religious matters; but let that charity,
which I have ſo fully deſcribed, govern all your counſels—let it
15. 16. govern your preaching—and general intercourſe with each other.

I need not deſire you to pay reſpect to Stephanus. He, and
his family were not only the firſt converts in Achaia, but have
17. been very uſeful to me in their miniſterial labours. Your ſending
him, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus, was particularly pleaſing to
me: for they have given me a full account of the ſtate of your
18. church; and have ſupplied what was omitted in your letter. They
have given me that comfort, which they have often given you.
19. 20. Such men you will ever hold in high eſteem.

I tranſmit to you the general ſalutation of the church; and likewiſe of private chriſtians. Be you as affectionate among each other, as this church is diſpoſed to be affectionate to you.

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10. Probably becauſe of his youth this caution was thought neceſſary; ſee 1 Tim. iv. 12.

I now

I now with my own hand ſign this epiſtle: and at the ſame 21.
time, my kind remembrance of you all—wiſhing you always to 22.
conſider, that he who does not live up to the religion he profeſſes, deprives himſelf of all hope of happineſs hereafter.

May the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you all. Reſt 23. 24.
aſſured of my conſtant affection.

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22. The expreſſion *Maran-atha* is Syriac; which language had entirely corrupted the Hebrew after the captivity. It ſignifies *The Lord cometh*; namely *to execute vengeance*. After the Jews had loſt the power of life and death, they uſed to execrate with this curſe, ſuch crimes as were capital; as much as to ſay, *Tho we cannot puniſh them, the Lord will*. St. Paul therefore ſpeaking of the apoſtacy of profeſſed chriſtians, as of a crime not puniſhable by human laws, ſays, alluding to this practice, *Tho men cannot puniſh it, God will*.

END OF THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

SECOND EPISTLE

TO THE

CORINTHIANS.

CHAP. I.

PAUL, an apoſtle of the Lord Jeſus; and Timothy; to the church of Corinth; and to all the chriſtians of Achaia; grace, and peace from God, and Chriſt! 1. 2.

With thankfulneſs I look up to God, the Father of our bleſſed Lord—the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort; for that conſolation in all my afflictions, which enables me to comfort them, who are afflicted. For if our faith in Chriſt be the ſource of our worldly diſtreſſes, it is much more the ſource of our ſpiritual conſolation. It is a happineſs alſo to me to think, that my *afflictions* and *joys*, are yours alſo; and that they tend to impreſs you with holy ſentiments on both theſe ſubjects. For I doubt not, but as you are partakers of the diſtreſſes, which often attend religion; you are alſo partakers of it's conſolations. The diſtreſſes, of which 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

8. An account of Paul's ſufferings is contained in the xivth, xvith, and xixth chapters of Acts; ſome of which happened in Greece, and ſome in Aſia. The apoſtle ſeems more particularly in the 9th verſe to allude to his being left for dead, after he had been ſtoned. See Acts xiv. 19.

I par-

I particularly ſpeak, are thoſe I ſuffered in Aſia; which were indeed ſuch, that if I had truſted in any power leſs, than in that God, who raiſeth the dead, I ſhould have been overwhelmed by them. He can deliver in circumſtances the moſt deſperate. He hath often delivered me; and I fully truſt, that I ſhall ever receive
11. from him all proper deliverance. Your holy prayers alſo, I doubt not, united with mine in obtaining my deliverance; as your praiſes will unite with mine in expreſſing my thankfulneſs.

12. For myſelf, whatever my diſtreſſes have been from ill-diſpoſed men, I have always had the teſtimony of my own conſcience, that with honeſty, and ſincerity—through the grace of God, and not in worldly wiſdom, I have preached the goſpel of Chriſt.
13. You, in particular, are my witneſſes of this; as you have often acknowledged; and always, I doubt not, will acknowledge; con-
14. ſidering my preaching as the means of your happineſs; as I conſider your converſion as an addition to mine. In this I ſhall always rejoice; and eſpecially in the great day of the Lord Jeſus.

15. 16. In this kind diſpoſition toward you, I had determined to viſit you a ſecond time, in my way from Macedonia; and to receive your aſſiſtance in my journey to Judea. At that time I fully
17. intended it: but they who are ready to put a bad interpretation on all my actions, I find, accuſe me of levity; as if I did not
18. intend, what I aſſured you I did intend. God is my witneſs, I
19. did mean it: and neither in this, nor in any thing elſe, that I, or
20. your other paſtors in Chriſt, have ſaid to you, have you been deceived. The promiſes of God are all founded in truth; and

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11. By *gift* here the apoſtle means *deliverance*.

15. See 1 Cor. xvi. 6, 7.

18. When a man plainly *affirmed, or denied*, or, (in the Hebrew language,) had his *yea, yea*; and *nay, nay*; he was an honeſt man. But when he affirmed, and denied the ſame thing; or had *his yea, and nay* at the ſame time, he was the contrary.

20. The connection of theſe verſes with the preceding is difficult.

we,

we, who act under Christ, act under the influence of the same Holy Spirit of truth.——The true cause, I call God to witness, 23.
of my not coming, at this time, to Corinth, was tenderness and forbearance to those who have offended. I would not have it be 24.
supposed, that I pretend to assert any dominion over your faith. CHAP. II.
Your faith is unalterably established. All I wish for, in this matter, is to contribute to your spiritual joy. And for this reason I 1.
chose to defer my journey, till all occasion of offence should be removed. My comfort is in your joy: if I throw you into distress, 2.
I make myself unhappy.——Instead of coming to you therefore 3.
in person, I write this letter; lest that happy meeting, which I expected, should be turned into an unhappy one: for I know, that you are partakers of my joys, and griefs.

The severity of my last letter towards the incestuous person, 4.
cost me much affliction, and many tears. I was grieved for the distress I had occasioned: but I thought it necessary to give you this instance of my love. In my grief, I doubt not, but you all 5.
had your share; tho I do not suppose, you were all involved in the occasion of it.——I now think, that as the offender hath shewn 6.
penitence, his punishment should be remitted. Forgive him therefore; receive him again into your communion; and shew him, 7. 8.
by not laying too severe a hand upon him, that you love *him*, tho you detest his *crime*. The end of my writing is fully attained, 9.
when I have restored this offender; and seen a proof of your obedience. My forgiveness in Christ shall certainly follow yours; 10.
for I know that despair is among the devil's chief means of seduction. 11.

And now, my brethren, be fully assured of my earnest care, and 12. 13.
concern for you. If you want a new proof of it, know, that when

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2. What tenderness of sentiment the holy apostle expresses here to his flock!

5. There is a great difficulty in this verse.

I went to Troas, with a view to preach the gospel; tho I met there a very ready acceptance; yet because I found not Titus, from whom I expected an account of my Corinthian converts, I could
14. not rest; but went in search of him into Macedonia. There I found him—and there, I thank God, I heard that happy account of the prosperity of your church, which makes me triumph in Christ.

15. 16. But still great is the difficulty of our ministry. To some we are the means of life: while we increase the guilt of others, who continue incorrigible under our reproof.—Yet a gracious God, I doubt not, will accept our services, with whatever success they
17. may be attended: for we have this inward testimony, that we do
CHAP. III. not corrupt the gospel; but preach it with sincerity, as in the
1. sight of God.—It is not however, I trust, necessary for me to say any thing in my own defence; or to procure, as may be required from others, letters of recommendation to you, or from you. Your
2. 3. conversion is our letter of recommendation, open to the perusal of all—dictated by Christ, tho written by us—not with ink—nor like the law, on tables of stone; but with the Spirit of God
4. on your hearts. Such confidence have we in our ministry before
5. God, and Christ! Not that we form this confidence in any degree, on ourselves: but trust intirely in God, who hath ap-
6. pointed us his ministers of the gospel; from whence proceedeth

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14. See chap. vii. 6.

15. 16. The sense of these two verses is not perfectly clear. I have transposed them by explaining the sixteenth first: which I think, renders them somewhat clearer.

6. *Who hath made us*, says the text, *able ministers of the New Testament—not of the letter; but of the Spirit.* This expression hath given great latitude to certain interpreters of scripture; who from hence think themselves authorized in expounding what they please in an allegorical sense. Whereas, it is evident, the apostle has nothing to do with the *writings* of the New Testament, which did not yet exist: but meant only to shew, that the New Testament, (or christian dispensation) was superior to the law.

that

that life, which the law could not give. If the diſpenſation, and 7. 8.
miniſtry of the law were of a glorious nature, (which was ſufficiently ſhewn by that luſtre on the face of Moſes, which dazzled the eyes of the people) how much more glorious may we ſuppoſe the diſpenſation of the goſpel, which was intended to compleat it? If the law were glorious, which was defective, and could 9.
not ſave; how much more glorious is the goſpel, which makes up all it's deficiencies? There can indeed be no compariſon between 10. 11.
a diſpenſation, which was always intended, in a due courſe of time, to expire; and one of continual duration. The miniſters 12.
of the goſpel therefore ſpeak plainly, and freely it's great truths: while Moſes, covering his face with a veil, ſignified by that type, 13.
that there remained ſtill ſomething behind unſeen. And this veil 14. 15.
is ſtill upon the hearts of the greateſt part of the Jewiſh nation; who yet ſee not the glory concealed behind. Nor can they ſee 16.
it, till they embrace the chriſtian faith; which will ſpiritualize 17.
their hearts; and at once ſet them free from all the ceremonies of the law, and the dominion of ſin. In this holy religion, un- 18.
veiled, we ſee, as in a glaſs, the image of our Lord; and conforming ourſelves to it through the influence of his Holy Spirit, CHAP. IV.
are carried daily to new degrees of perfection.

Under this ſenſe therefore of the holineſs of the chriſtian religion, 1.
and it's miniſtry, I perſevere through all oppoſition, in the diſcharge of my duty. Conſcious to myſelf, that I uſe no deceit, 2.
nor worldly arts of any kind, I addreſs the conſciences of men

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15. Mr. Lock ſuppoſes, St. Paul may poſſibly allude here to a cuſtom, ſtill among the Jews in their ſynagogues, of putting a veil over their faces, when the law is read.

18. This is a beautiful allegory. As Moſes by looking at the divine Shechinah, received a luſtre on his countenance; ſo we, by looking at Chriſt in his goſpel, ſhould receive the impreſſion of his glorious image.

3. 4. in all the honeſty of truth before God. It is impoſſible indeed, that any one ſhould reſiſt the force of this pure, and rational belief; unleſs his underſtanding were firſt diſturbed by the wickedneſs
5. of the world. We preach not ourſelves, my brethren, but Chriſt Jeſus, our Lord. *We* are merely the miniſters of the goſpel, re-
6. ceiving all our knowledge from that God, who with the ſame power, with which he commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath illuminated our hearts with the rays of the goſpel,
7. and the bright image of it's bleſſed Author.——Conſcious therefore of our own imperfections; and, at the ſame time, of the
8. power of God, under which we act; we are afflicted on every ſide; yet always comforted: we are perplexed; but never in de-
9. ſpair: we are perſecuted; but never forſaken: we faint; but al-
10. ways revive. The ſufferings, and death of our bleſſed Lord, ſtand
11. threatening on one ſide; his glorious reſurrection exhorting on the other. For as we die for his ſake, we are confident alſo of living
12. through him; and of being, through our death, the miniſtring
13. cauſe of your life, as well as of our own. Under all theſe worldly diſtreſſes, a ſteady faith ſupports us. Like the holy pſalmiſt we cry out, *tho we are in the midſt of the ſorrow of death; yet ſhall we walk before God in the land of the living.* Under the influence
14. therefore of this faith, we preach the goſpel; fully aſſured, that, that God, who raiſed up Chriſt from the dead, will raiſe us up alſo, and all good chriſtians with us.

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4. It is ſurprizing that any interpreters ſhould ſuppoſe, as ſome do, that God Almighty is meant by the *God of this world*; as equivalent phraſes are ſo often applied in ſcripture to the devil.

13. It ſeems plain, that the apoſtle alludes to the cxvi. Pſalm; which is a ſong of deliverance; and in which, as the apoſtle ſays, the holy pſalmiſt expreſſes his joy, through the influence of his faith. *I believed, and therefore have I ſpoken.* (See verſes 3, 9, 10.)

My

My ſufferings therefore in the cauſe of religion, reſpect two great 15.
ends—your good—and the glory of God. Hence ariſe our zeal, 16.
and perſeverance. Tho the body ſhrink under the oppreſſion; the
mind is ſtrengthened more and more; and not ſuffering itſelf to 17.
be depreſſed by the light afflictions of mortality, it riſes above
them. Unbounded by the viſible things of this world, it paſſes 18.
their limits into the regions of faith; where it contemplates the CHAP. V.
glories of eternity. Our earthly tabernacle, we know, will ſoon 1.
diſſolve; but it is our great hope, and conſolation, that we ſhall
have an everlaſting one prepared for us hereafter. Our miſeries 2. 3. 4.
here make us wiſh, in God's good time, for our heavenly abode;
where we may lay down the burthen of life for the joys of immortality; of which God hath not only given us a promiſe; but 5.
a foretaſte alſo, by the inſpiration of his Holy Spirit.

In the full confidence then of this, we conſider ourſelves here, 6.
as at a diſtance from home. In this world our happineſs depends 7.
on hope; not enjoyment. We keep continually before us the 8.
proſpect of our heavenly home; where we ſhall be preſent with
the Lord. In the mean time, we live preparing ourſelves with 9.
our beſt endeavour, for his gracious acceptance; waiting for that 10.
awful time, when we muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat
of Chriſt; and receive our doom according to our deeds.

How deeply I have been influenced by theſe great truths; and 11.
how ſincerely I have preached them from a ſenſe of their importance
—God knows: and I hope you, who have had many teſtimonies
of my ſincerity on this head, will be able to vindicate me to thoſe, 12.
who may be too much governed by appearances.

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6. *Knowing that we are at home in the body*, is a very bad tranſlation; indeed it is directly contrary to the apoſtle's meaning. Ενδημουντες ſignifies properly *ſojourning*, not *being at home*.

9. Φιλοτιμουμεθα ſignifies ſomething more than *we labour—it is the height of our ambition*.

Whether

13. Whether the doctrine, which we preach—the acceptance of the Gentiles—be that wild doctrine, which the Jews represent it to be, let God be judge: but if it be the truth, yours is certainly the
14. gain. With what ideas of God's goodness can we suppose, that the mercies of the gospel are extended only *to a part of* mankind? If Christ died for all; we must suppose, that all equally want the
15. benefit of his death—the benefit of his laws—and the benefit of his
16. resurrection.——Henceforth therefore all difference among nations is done away. Our blessed Lord himself, tho once known under Jewish distinctions, is now no longer considered in that light: and
17. every man, of whatever nation, who receives the gospel faithfully, by a thorough change of heart, and life, belongs to Christ. The Jewish dispensation is intirely abolished; superseded by the christian.
18. 19. The goodness of God hath reconciled the whole world to himself, through Christ: and we are the appointed ministers of this recon-
20. ciliation. This is all we pretend to; exhorting you, as the ambas-
21. sadors of Christ, to accept the gracious terms of the gospel; and through holy lives, to be reconciled to God, who hath accepted
CHAP. VI. Christ's death as an offering for sin. As his ministers also, we
1. 2. intreat you not to receive the grace of God in vain; but to remember the words of the prophet, in which God promises a day of salvation to the Gentiles; which day of salvation, be assured, is now fully come.

3. For myself, it has been my constant endeavour so to live, as to throw no scandal on the ministry of the gospel. I have not lived

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13. Some interpreters suppose, that the apostle only alludes, in general, to the warmth and transport, with which he sometimes speaks. I think from what follows, from the 13th verse to the end of the chapter, and to the third of the next, that the apostle had the Gentiles in his eye; and some able commentators, especially Dr. Pyle, are of the same opinion. It must be confessed however that the passage is very obscure; and the transition to the Gentiles rather harsh.

2. See Isa. xlix. 5, 6, 8.

a life

a life of worldly enjoyment; but in a conſtant ſtate of ſuffering, 4. 5.
either from the enemies of religion; or in the courſe of my miniſ-
terial labours. I have endeavoured alſo to unite the practice of 6.
truth with the knowledge of it; and to give my preaching force, 7.
not only by miracles; but by a holy life.——In the mean time, 8. 9.
uninfluenced by the favourable, or unfavourable opinions of men, I
paſs daily through that variety of contradictions, which are ever
incident to the life of an apoſtle—living, and dying, at the ſame time 10.
—perſecuted; yet exalted—ſorrowful; yet rejoicing—poor myſelf;
yet making others rich—deprived of every thing; and yet poſſeſſing
all things.

To you my ſpiritual children, I ſpeak freely on theſe ſubjects. 11.
My heart is open. But I fear the *filial* affection is not equal to the 12.
parental. Let me earneſtly intreat a full return of that love which 13.
I ſhew.——As the greateſt inſtance of it, let me beſeech you to 14. 15. 16.
have no communication with the wicked practices of the heathen
around you. Nothing can be of a nature more oppoſite to the
holy religion you profeſs. Light is not more at variance with
darkneſs; than the abominable rites, and wicked lives of a heathen;
with the holy worſhip, and purity of a chriſtian. A chriſtian
church is the temple of God. The prophetic promiſes of God's
dwelling among his people, and being their God, belongs now 17.
peculiarly to them. As the Jews were ordered to leave the heathen
in ancient times; ſo are you now. *Separate yourſelves*, ſaith the 18.

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14. There is ſomething very expreſſive in the original word, ετεροζυγουντες: *Be not like two animals yoked together, and drawing in oppoſite directions.* Such are the lives of a pious chriſtian, and a wicked heathen.—The apoſtle however cannot mean here to exclude all communication between good and bad men. He plainly ſhews 1 Cor. v. 10, that this could not be avoided. His precept therefore goes no farther than to exclude his converts from joining in the idolatrous rites, or other wicked practices, of the heathen.

16. 17. 18. See Levit. xxvi. 12. Iſa. lii. 11. Jer. xxxi. 1.

Lord

Lord now, as he did formerly: *touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you; I will be a father to you; and you shall be sons and*
CHAP. VII. *daughters unto me*; saith the Lord.——Since then my brethren,
1. you have these holy promises, let me exhort you to live suitably to
2. them; avoiding every impurity of life; and improving in every christian duty. Reject not these kind admonitions: but receive me among your truest friends—as one, who hath endeavoured, by all means in his power, to promote your temporal, and eternal happiness.

3. And yet I say not this from any doubts, or dissatisfaction: for, as I have often told you, you are my greatest joy. I could live, and
4. with you. What I say, proceeds from my affection to you: for I glory in you; and in all my distresses feel a comfort from the
5. 6. thoughts of your progress in the gospel.——And yet the distress I felt on your account in Macedonia, before God graciously relieved
7. me by the coming of Titus, was very great. The account he brought me of your penitence, and sincere regard for me, was indeed a comfort to me; and eased me of that distress, which I felt
8. on having written my former letter. That letter, I find, gave
9. you the degree of sorrow, which I wished. And I am now glad I wrote it, as it brought those, for whose particular use it was
10. intended, to a sincere repentance. There are two kinds of sorrow, the *religious*, and the *worldly*. The latter produces no effect. But

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2. Some commentators consider the apostle here as alluding to the deceits of their false teachers. I think it more probable, that by a negative he means only modestly to imply an affirmative. *I have wronged no man:* that is, *I have done all in my power to assist every man.*

5. How affectionate is the distress, which the apostle shews in this, and in some of the succeeding verses; alluding to the opposition he had met with, and the severity he had used, which he feared might be too great. Without were *fightings*—within were *fears*.

the

the ſorrow, which you ſhewed, had every ſign of godly ſorrow. 11.
It produced an earneſt vindication of yourſelves—great diſtreſs and indignation at what had paſſed—and a vehement deſire, and zeal to avoid every offence for the future. On my part be aſſured, that 12.
what I wrote, was not through any partiality to one, or diſlike to another; but merely from a concern for the good of the whole church. This is the great foundation of my joy. Nor was I a 13.
little happy to find, that you had occaſioned the ſame joy in Titus. For as I had boaſted of you to him, it could not but be a great 14
pleaſure to me to find, I had ſaid nothing, but what he acknowledged to be the truth. His affection you have intirely gained by 15.
that reſpectful ſubmiſſion, with which you received the injunctions he brought. My confidence therefore in you is effectually ſecured. 16.

I muſt now make inquiry about collections for your poor brethren CHAP. VIII.
in Judea; and muſt remind you of the charitable diſpoſition of the churches of Macedonia; which have ſhewn their liberality in the 1. 2. 3.
midſt of all their afflictions, even beyond their abilities; and have 4.
requeſted us to accept their bounty; and to take upon us the 5.
diſtribution of it. Theirs was an inſtance of liberality even beyond my expectation: but it proceeded from thoſe, who had firſt given themſelves to the Lord; and were fully aſſured, that we ſhould ſuffer them to do only what was agreeable to his will. I thought 6.
it proper therefore, that Titus ſhould recommend this example to you, in order to promote your liberality; that as you have ſhewn 7.
yourſelves endowed with other chriſtian graces, you may give an inſtance of this grace alſo.

You muſt not however conſider my *exhortation*, as a *command*. 8.
It is meant only to encourage you not to be behind any other church in proving the ſincerity of your love; and in following the example 9.
of your bleſſed Saviour; who, tho he was rich, yet for our ſakes made himſelf poor.——But tho I give you no command on this 10.

head; yet it is my advice to you, not to put off this good work
11. any longer. As it was talked of a year ago; and as you ſhewed then an inclination towards it, you will now, I hope, compleat it; and make a collection according to every man's abilities. To
12. make alms-giving an *act of religion*, it muſt proceed from a willing
13. mind.——Yet I have no inclination to eaſe others, by laying a
14. burthen on you: but to make that happy equality among you, which is ſo deſirable among brethren. Your abundance, at preſent, ſupplies their need; and their abundance, in ſome future time,
15. may ſupply yours. Such was the wiſe diſtribution of God, when he provided for the neceſſities of our forefathers: *He that gathered much, had nothing over; and he that gathered little, had no lack.*

16. The ſame ſentiments of this matter fill the heart of Titus; who
17. wants not my exhortations to take the earlieſt opportunity to viſit
18. you. With him alſo I ſend another diſciple, whoſe eminent graces
19. are not a little diſtinguiſhed among all the churches; inaſmuch as he was the perſon appointed to aſſiſt me in the adminiſtration
20. of their bounty—an office, which, among ſo many cenſurers, I
21. did not care to undertake by myſelf; as it is my conſtant endeavour to preſerve a fair appearance, as much as poſſible even in the
22. ſight of man.——With theſe two diſciples I ſhall ſend a third, who hath always ſhewn himſelf very active in the affairs of the goſpel; and is particularly deſirous to viſit you, ſince the pleaſing

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15. Exod. xvi. 18.

18. This other diſciple is ſuppoſed to be St. Luke. *But his praiſe in the goſpel*, is not ſuppoſed to ariſe from his *writing*, but *preaching* it. His goſpel, it is thought, was not then written.

19. *Declaration of your ready mind.* This ſeems rather difficult. We do not eaſily underſtand how *the bounty of the Macedonian churches* could be a declaration of the *ready mind of the Corinthians*. But in ſome good copies ημων is read inſtead of υμων, which ſets all to rights.—The choice of the churches is here made by the χειροτονια, which ſignifies the *holding up of hands*; in oppoſition to the χειροθεσια, or election by the *impoſition of hands*.

22. Suppoſed to be Apollos.

account

account I have given him of your ſituation.——If therefore any 23.
inquiries are made with regard to theſe three diſciples, be aſſured,
that Titus is my particular aſſiſtant, and fellow-labourer; and
that the other two were engaged in a truſt of the ſame kind by
the Macedonian churches; and are faithful miniſters of the goſpel.
You will ſhew them that kindneſs therefore, that is due to the 24.
churches they repreſent; and agreeable to that favourable im- CHAP. IX.
preſſion of you, which I have given them.

As to your raiſing a collection, I can have no doubt. I know 1. 2.
your ready zeal, which I have boaſted of to the churches of Ma-
cedonia, with a view to incite the charity of others. I am only 3. 4. 5.
afraid, that you may not be intirely ready; and for this purpoſe
I ſend theſe brethren to you, not to take your collections; but
only to give you notice to have them prepared: leſt if any of the
Macedonian chriſtians come with me, and we ſhould find you
unprepared; I who have boaſted ſo much of you; and you, of
whom I have boaſted, may both be aſhamed together.

The particular ſum, which is proper for each to give, muſt 6.
be left to every man's diſcretion. Only this I muſt ſay in general,
that he who ſoweth plentifully, ſhall alſo reap plentifully. Let 7.
no man however give from any motive, but that of a charitable 8.
heart. Nothing elſe can pleaſe that gracious Maſter; who is
able to add more and more to his liberal ſervants——who can
increaſe their power of doing good here; and (as the pſalmiſt ſpeaks 9.
of the truely charitable man) *give their righteouſneſs it's eternal*
reward hereafter.——May that God, who enableth you to do 10.
works of charity, reward you for them, among his faithful ſer-
vants! And may he inrich you more, and more in thoſe graces, 11.
which redound ſo much to his glory! For your charity does 12.

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9. See Pſ. cxii. 9.

not ſpend itſelf in it's firſt intention, that of adminiſtring to the wants of the neceſſitous; but becomes afterwards the ſource of
13. praiſe, and thankſgiving to God, in which all thoſe pious chriſtians, who are aſſiſted by it, unite; while they look up to the great Giver with gratitude, for your charity, as well as all the other
14. inſtances of his goodneſs; and join in prayers for you, the bleſſed
15. inſtruments of it.——Thanks be to God for extending the in-
CHAP. X. fluence of one virtue through ſo wide a range †!

1. 2. I muſt now change my ſubject. I am ſorry to find there are ſtill among you ſome, who repreſent me as a deceiver; and ſet at variance my behaviour, when abſent, and preſent; making even my bodily infirmities the ground of their offence. Such perſons I ſhould rather wiſh to reclaim by gentleneſs, than treat with
3. apoſtolic ſeverity. Why ſhould they dwell upon the weakneſs of my bodily powers? Of what conſequence are they? It is
4. not through the powers of nature that I exerciſe my office. It is not through them, but through the power of God, that the
5. prejudices of mankind are conquered—that all the vain opinions, and reaſonings of men are ſubdued—that a profane, and idolatrous world is brought to the knowledge of God—and that the ſtubborn heart of man is opened by faith, and obedience, to the law of
6. Chriſt. From the ſame high authority alſo I have the power to puniſh ſuch offenders, as are not yet reduced to obedience; but, notwithſtanding the ſubmiſſion of others, ſtill perſiſt in their op-
7. poſition; judging by mere appearances; and forming opinions of
8. me by ſuch rules, as they would not ſubmit to themſelves. If I ſhould exert towards ſuch perſons a little more of that authority, which God hath given me to keep in awe notorious offenders,

† In what a grand, and noble light the apoſtle places alms-giving in theſe laſt four verſes!

I ſhould

I ſhould not perhaps exceed my commiſſion. It would then be 9. 10. 11.
found, not only that my letters have their weight, (which they allow) but that my preſence alſo would be accompanied with authority. I ſhall not however imitate the vanity of thoſe, who 12. 13. 14.
have no ſcale of compariſon, but themſelves: nor boaſt of my own gifts, which are merely diſtributed to me by God for your ſake. I claim nothing myſelf, being enabled ſolely by God to preach the goſpel among you. And not wiſhing to build on the 15. 16.
labours of others, I have hope, that when your faith ſhall be fully eſtabliſhed, I may inlarge my views, and carry the goſpel into regions ſtill more remote.——Thus will all boaſting ceaſe, where 17.
the glory of God is the great end. A man's own commendation 18.
of himſelf is of no value: let us endeavour to obtain the only commendation worth our purſuit—the approbation of God.. CHAP. XI.

Yet aſcribe it not to folly, and vanity, if I ſhould ſpeak a little 1.
of my own labours. Greatly concerned I am for you all, that 2.
you may perſevere in the goſpel; and that you may never be prevented by deſigning men, from attending to it's plain, and ſimple 3.
truths.——I hope you never will, till a better Saviour, a better 4.
Spirit, and a holier goſpel be preached unto you. For myſelf, I 5.
imagine my labours among you, are not inferior to thoſe of any apoſtle. Inferior I may be to many in elocution, and addreſs: 6.
but I take upon me to ſay, I am inferior to none, in preaching the goſpel in ſincerity and truth.

But perhaps it may ſeem an offence, and be conſidered as a 7.
debaſement, that I have laboured for my own maintenance, while I preached the goſpel among you—that I received from other 8.

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16. *Not to boaſt of another man's line of things made ready to our hand.* This obſcure expreſſion, and others in this epiſtle, ſeem to refer to ſome particular perſon, who, through undue pretences, had interfered with St. Paul's church at Corinth.

churches

9. churches, and not from you—and that even while I was with you, I received my maintenance from the Macedonian churches.

10. 11. This indeed is the truth: and I make it my boaſt. But if any
12. of you conceive it ſhews a want of love to you, he is greatly miſtaken. The real cauſe is, that I may take away all occaſion of reproach from thoſe among you, who pretend, tho not perhaps
13. with truth, to this diſintereſtedneſs themſelves. I fear there are
14. ſome ſuch deſigning men among you. Satan himſelf pretended
15. to be an angel of light: it cannot be matter of wonder therefore, if his miniſters ſhould follow his example; and draw on themſelves a like deſtruction.

16. Let me then in oppoſition to theſe teachers, boaſt a little of
17. 18. my own labours, however weak this boaſting may appear. Whether they glory in their Jewiſh, or in their chriſtian advantages, I
19. can place myſelf on an equality with them. Nor can you take amiſs my boaſting, inſomuch, as wiſe as you think yourſelves,
20. you ſuffer much more from your new inſtructors. Your under-
21. ſtandings are impoſed on; your poſſeſſions are freely taken: your perſons are inſulted: and we, the apoſtles of Chriſt, are treated with every reproach. Let me however aſſume ſome boldneſs in this matter; and ſhew them, whether, on a compariſon, I have
22. not more to ſay for myſelf, than they have.——Can they claim
23. 24. 25. more privileges from the law, than I claim?—Or, if they claim
26. 27. as miniſters of the goſpel (allow my boaſting) can they ſhew

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13. 14. 15. Let it all along be remembered, that theſe cenſures were made by an *inſpired apoſtle*. It does not belong to us to form ſuch judgments.

24, &c. Many of theſe diſtreſſes, which the apoſtle enumerates, are mentioned in the acts of the apoſtles.—The *thirty-nine ſtripes*, he received from the Jews. They were inflicted commonly with a ſcourge of three thongs, and were the utmoſt that could be inflicted. See Deut. xxv. 3. *Beating with rods* was a puniſhment inflicted by heathen magiſtrates, particularly the Romans. See Acts xvi. 23.

ſuch

ſuch labours as I have endured—the ſtripes—the impriſonments—
the dangers by ſea, and land—the various terrors of death—the
fatigues—the watchings—the want both of food and cloathing?
Beſides all theſe bodily afflictions, I am daily oppreſſed with thoſe 28.
cares, which ariſe from an attention to ſo many churches. This 29.
multiplies my diſtreſſes. Who in all theſe communities is weak,
whoſe weakneſs I do not feel; and endeavour to aſſiſt? Who is
perverted; and I am not on fire to recover him? If any boaſting 30.
be allowable, it may be allowable at leaſt to boaſt in ſufferings. 31. 32.
God knoweth the truth of what I affirm. My perſecutions indeed
began from the very firſt moment of my preaching the goſpel;
when the governor of Damaſcus, at the inſtigation of the Jews,
endeavoured early to apprehend me; and I evaded his ſearch by 33.
a ſtratagem. On that occaſion, and ever ſince have I been gra-
ciouſly delivered by the goodneſs of God.

CHAP. XII.

But on this ſubject I have ſaid enough. To this I could add 1.
viſions, and revelations. I could tell you of a perſon, who about 2. 3. 4.
fourteen years ago, was carried into heaven; but whether in the
body, or in the ſpirit, God only knoweth. There he ſaw, and
heard, what human language cannot deſcribe. Of ſuch glorious 5.
revelations a man might boaſt: but for myſelf, I will boaſt only
of my infirmities. And yet, if I ſhould boaſt, I ſpeak only the 6.
truth. But I forbear; as it may occaſion among my oppoſers, a
diſagreeable compariſon between ſuch pretenſions, and my preſent 7.
appear-

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33. See Acts ix. 25.

2. The apoſtle ſays, *I knew a man in Chriſt:* but this is only a modeſt way of expreſſing *himſelf*, whom he certainly meant.

7. Dr. Whitby, and other good interpreters, are of opinion, that by *the thorn in the fleſh*, St. Paul only means his bodily infirmities. Indeed Dr. Whitby's arguments are ſo ſtrong, that

appearance. These bodily infirmities have, no doubt, been given me by a gracious Providence to repress that undue exaltation, which might arise from such heavenly communications; and mine adversaries have found the means to turn them to my disadvantage. I
8. have often earnestly besought the Lord to remove this evil from
9. me. But God assists his servants in his own way: and tho my petitions were not granted in the manner, in which I hoped, I was assured, that God's grace should be sufficient for me; and that the greater my weaknesses were, the more evident would be the gracious assistance, I should receive. I boast therefore of infirmities, which
10. shew that the power of Christ dwells in me; for whose sake, I can even take pleasure in those infirmities; and in that disgrace, opposition, and persecution, which arise from them: because, in fact, my weakness is the greatest indication of that heavenly Power, that assists me.

11. Thus you compel me to that boasting, which you ought to have prevented by defending my character against those who have maligned me: for tho in myself I am nothing; yet am I, through the grace
12. of God, on an equality with the first apostles. I have surely shewn among you, all the signs of an apostle by refusing no labour in preaching the gospel; and by confirming the truth of it by miracles.
13. In what instance are you inferior to other churches; except in my not receiving any maintenance among you? This is the only injury
14. I have done you. I am now preparing a third time to visit you; and I shall act then, as I have hitherto done, by putting you to no expence on my account. It is you, not your possessions, that

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that I think they cannot be refuted.—In our translation the *thorn in the flesh*, and the *messenger of Satan* are made the same. It should be translated, *a thorn in the flesh; that the messenger of Satan, &c.* Some commentators suppose, and I think it is no unlikely conjecture, that this *thorn in the flesh* was particularly an impediment in his speech; the same which disqualified Moses from speaking to Pharoah. Exod. iv. 10.

I aim

I aim at. I am like thoſe parents, who lay up for their children; but will not ſuffer their children to contribute any thing to them.— What would I not ſuffer for the ſake of your happineſs!—I only 15.
wiſh the return, which I receive, was equal to my love.

I know it hath been ſaid, that I ſuffer others to draw money 16.
from you on my account, tho I impoſe nothing on you myſelf.—— Let them name any perſon, whom they ſuſpect of ſuch artful 17.
dealings. I ſent Titus among you; and another diſciple. Did 18.
either of thoſe act deceitfully with you? Or can any one inſtance be ſhewn, in which thoſe diſciples followed not the example, which we have ſet them?

Think not that I want to apologize for myſelf. I ſpeak before 19.
God, I have no end in what I ſay, but your edification. I fear 20.
that I ſhall find many among you ſuch as I wiſh not; and that they ſhall find me, ſuch as they wiſh not. This will certainly be the caſe, if thoſe factions, and contentions continue ſtill, which I have reaſon to believe did once exiſt: or if I ſtill find among 21.
you that uncleanneſs, and impurity, which I have ſo often CHAP. XIII.
bewailed. In this my enſuing viſit I ſhall certainly bring theſe
ſinful profeſſors to a ſtrict account; and hear what can be ſaid for 1. 2.
and againſt them. What I told you before, I now repeat, that if I find cauſe of offence, I will not ſpare; but will in perſon give 3.
thoſe impure members of your church, that proof, which they inquire for, of my power in Chriſt. For as our bleſſed Lord in 4.
his human ſtate ſuffered all the weakneſſes of humanity, and was

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3. The apoſtle ſeems to threaten that ſeverity, which was ſometimes exerciſed towards notorious offenders. But it ſhould be obſerved; firſt, that this ſeverity was exerciſed by *apoſtles*, under the immediate direction of God; and therefore cannot become a rule to us— and ſecondly, that the apoſtle's *threatnings* ſeem generally to have been ſo well directed, as to render the *execution* of them needleſs.

afterwards raiſed to glory; ſo we, his apoſtles, however weak we may appear as to bodily endowments, can through him exert the power of God.

5. Inſtead however of inquiring for a proof of Chriſt in *us*; I could wiſh theſe members of your church would inquire after a proof of Chriſt in *themſelves*—whether they are of Chriſt's family—or whether they are among thoſe, who are diſapproved by God.

6. 7. For us, I truſt, they will not find us of this latter claſs. But let them conſider us in what light they pleaſe; my prayer to God

8. is, that *they* may be approved. If they are accepted of God, they need fear nothing from us: for it is not even in our power to

9. cenſure thoſe, who act in conformity to religion. It will prove indeed the higheſt pleaſure to me, to find my hands thus bound

10. up, as it were, by your penitent and holy lives. It is for this reaſon, that I give you notice of my intention to viſit you; that when I come, I may lay all ſeverity aſide; and ſhew you, how much more God deſires your repentance, than your puniſhment.

11. In concluſion, my brethren, be aſſured, that peace, and happineſs, and holy joy from God, will be the never failing con-

12. ſequence of an increaſe in chriſtian perfection. Above all things,

13. let the grace of charity abound among you; in which holy bond the brethren here deſire to be connected with you.

14. The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghoſt, be with you all. Amen.

END OF THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

PREFACE

TO THE

EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

AFTER St. Paul had left Galatia, where he had planted the gospel; his new converts were seduced, as they had been in other places, by certain judaizing christians, who taught the observance of the Jewish law, as necessary to salvation. This was the first heresy, as we observed before, that obtained in the christian church. The apostle hearing of it at Corinth, where, it is supposed, he then was, writes the Galatians this epistle.

He first assures them, that the doctrines, he had preached, were the same, which the apostles had taught at Jerusalem. This probably had been denied: for it appears, as if these judaizing christians had represented Paul himself as an upholder of circumcision. (See chap. v. 11.)——The apostle then, about the middle of the second chapter, begins his argument, by shewing the superiority of the gospel to the law; which he continues (answering objections as he proceeds) to the end of the epistle. He himself, when he was *among the Jews* (according to his usual maxim of *becoming all things to all men, that he might by all means save some*) had observed many of the customs of the law; which he conceived to be matters of mere indifference. But here, when he writes to *the Gentiles*, who had been seduced to believe *these things necessary to salvation*, he alters his language; and, in pointed terms, shews them to be vain, and ineffectual.

This epiſtle is commonly ſuppoſed to have been written about the year fifty-three. The ſubſcription, at the end of it, from Rome, is manifeſtly ſpurious.

EPISTLE

TO THE

GALATIANS.

PAUL, an apoſtle immediately by divine commiſſion; and all the brethren, which are with me, ſalute the churches of Galatia. Grace and peace be with you from God the Father, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; who died to deliver us from the effects of ſin, through the goodneſs of God, to whom be glory for ever. Amen! CHAP. I. 1. 2. 3. 4.

I am ſurprized to find you have already ſhewn ſo much unſteadineſs in the profeſſion of your religion; and that you have been ſo eaſily led aſide by thoſe, who pervert the goſpel. Aſſure yourſelves, there is no other goſpel beſides that, which we have preached unto you: and whoever takes upon himſelf, either to add to it, or diminiſh from it, ſhall moſt aſſuredly incur the wrath of God. Have I any intereſt of my own, think you, in this matter? Or am I appointed by man to the office of an apoſtle? The goſpel, which 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11.

7. Ο ουκ εστιν αλλο, is rendered very improperly in our tranſlation, *which is not another*. It ſhould be, *which is owing to nothing elſe*.

I have

12. I have preached, is not the invention of man. It was revealed to
13. me immediately from heaven. You know the character I once
14. bore in the church of God; and the extraordinary zeal I had for
15. 16. the religion of my forefathers. But when God, in his mercy,
called me to preach the gospel to the heathen, I made no application
17. to any man for farther instruction. I had not even a conference
with the apostles at Jerusalem: but went into Arabia, and returned
18. by Damascus. Three years afterwards I made a short stay with
19. Peter at Jerusalem; where I saw none of the other apostles, except
20. James, the Lord's brother. This, you may be assured, is the
21. truth. I afterwards went into Syria, and Cilicia: but was personally
22. 23. unknown to the churches of Judea. They had heard only of my
24. having formerly persecuted the gospel, and of my conversion after-
CHAP. II. wards; for which they glorified God. Fourteen years after, I went
again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me; and
1. 2. under the guidance of the Holy Spirit I communicated apart to
the principal apostles there, the doctrines, which I preach among
the Gentiles; that I might avoid, both for the past, and future,
3. every handle of offence. But none of them thought it proper,
that Titus, who was of Gentile extraction, should be circumcised.

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12. Ananias seems to have been the most likely person to instruct Paul: but if we turn to the history (Acts ix.) there is not a syllable about Ananias's instructing him. He was also certain days with the disciples at Damascus: (Acts ix. 19) but we have no account of his being instructed by them.

19. *Brother* signifies here, only a near *kinsman*. He was son to the Virgin's sister, as is commonly supposed.

20. The apostle, in this account of his proceedings, means only to shew, that he had not received his doctrine from men. But he asserts in a very solemn manner the truth of what he said; because his conversion was a very wonderful event.

2. The apostle says, *he communicated privately to them of reputation*. The reason of this reserve seems to be, that he feared giving offence, if he should publish *openly among the Jews*, the abolition of the Jewish ceremonies; and the reception of the Gentiles. The times, at Jerusalem at least, would not yet bear it.

In

In our aſſemblies were ſome Jewiſh zealots, who came with no good 4. 5.
intention. But notwithſtanding my readineſs to comply on all
innocent occaſions with the prejudices of others, I thought this a
point, which demanded great firmneſs. Thus the judaizing opinions
of thoſe, who wiſhed to add the ceremonies of the law to the
goſpel, found as little countenance at Jeruſalem, as they had found
before at Antioch. Nor indeed did the apoſtles at Jeruſalem, in 6.
the conference we had together, add any thing to my doctrine. On 7. 8. 9.
the contrary, they were ſo fully convinced of the truth of my
apoſtleſhip, that even James, Peter, and John received me as a
fellow-labourer in Chriſt; and deſired only, that, in my apoſtleſhip 10.
among the Gentiles, I ſhould remember the poor in Judea, to which
I readily conſented.——Sometime after when Peter came to Antioch, 11.
I freely oppoſed him. He had not ſcrupled to eat with the Gentiles; 12.
till ſome Jewiſh chriſtians coming to him from James, he was
afraid of giving them offence; and temporiſed with them more,
than appeared to me agreeable to the truth of the goſpel: and in 13.
this he was countenanced by ſome others; and even by Barnabas
himſelf. When I obſerved this, I publicly told Peter, that, as 14.
he had ſo far laid aſide the Jewiſh law, as to converſe freely with
the Gentiles; it could not but appear ſtrange, that he ſhould
incourage the Gentiles to obſerve the ceremonies of the Jews.

In fact, my brethren, even we, who have by birth the privileges 15.
of Jews, acknowledge, that we are not juſtified by theſe privileges; 16.
but by the faith of Chriſt. And for the ſake of this juſtification
we believe in Chriſt; and relinquiſh the law. If we ſeek juſtification 17.

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10. The Jewiſh poor, found a conſiderable reſource in the ſacrifices of the temple, on which they greatly depended. But ſuch of them as became chriſtians, were probably deprived of this advantage, and were rendered more neceſſitous, than the poor in other places. We ſee St. Paul in ſeveral of his epiſtles ſtirs the Gentile chriſtians to make collections for the Jewiſh.

12. See Acts x. 28, and alſo xi. 3.

by

by the law, what do we make of Chriſt, by whom we pretend to
18. be juſtified? Not ſurely the miniſter of ſalvation. If I have recourſe
19. 20. to the law, I acknowledge myſelf ſtill unjuſtified by Chriſt. But
21. by renouncing the law, I live through Chriſt, who gave himſelf for me. Otherwiſe, I ſhould fruſtrate the grace of God; and ſubſtitute legal righteouſneſs inſtead of the death of Chriſt.

CHAP. III.

How is it then, that you, who have been ſo fully inſtructed in the cauſe, and deſign of Chriſt's death, ſhould ſuffer yourſelves to
1. 2. be ſo ſtrangely miſled? Did you receive the *miraculous gifts of the*
3. *Spirit*, from the law, or from the goſpel? And after ſuch *heavenly favours*, do you expect to be perfected by *carnal ordinances?* Why
4. have you ſuffered ſo much for the goſpel, if the efficacy of the
5. goſpel be now relinquiſhed? The Spirit which hath been ſhed; and the miracles which have been wrought among you; were they derived from the obſervances of the law, or from the power of the goſpel?

6. Even Abraham himſelf was juſtified by faith; and is therefore
7. 8. in fact, the father of *all* true believers: for God, who from the beginning, intended to juſtify the Gentiles by faith, aſſured him,
9. *That all the nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed in him.* So that you ſee Abraham, and all who purſue his ſteps, are juſtified in
10. the ſame manner. The law could not ſave. It required *ſtrict obedience:* and as no man could pretend to this; no man, of courſe,
11. could be juſtified by the law. A prophet under the law itſelf
12. tells you, that *the juſt ſhall live by faith.* By the *law* therefore, it is plain, they could not live.

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2. 2 Cor. xi. 4. 1 Cor. xii.

5. This appeal to miracles, at that early period, when ſo many could have contradicted the appeal, if it had not been juſt, is a ſtrong argument for the certainty of miracles.

6. 8. 10. See Gen. xv. 6. Gen. xii. 3. Deut. xxvii. 26.

11. Habbak. ii. 4.

From

From that curſe therefore, which the law could not avert, 13.
Chriſt hath redeemed us by ſuffering the accurſed death of the
croſs: and hence the Gentiles, receiving the bleſſing as Abraham's 14.
ſeed, have inherited the promiſes through faith. Even a human 15.
covenant is of ſuch force, that no man can diſannul it, or make any
addition to it. The covenant therefore, which God made with 16.
Abraham (and which by the very tenor of it was plainly reſtricted
to *believers*) could not be altered by the *law*, which was given four 17.
hundred, and thirty years afterwards. If the bleſſing had come by 18.
the *law*; it could not be derived, as it manifeſtly is, from the
promiſe made to Abraham.

It may be aſked then, What end the law anſwered? Why was 19. 20.
it given?

It was given to reſtrain wickedneſs, till the goſpel ſhould be revealed; and the promiſe ſhould take effect. But from the very mode of it's delivery, it could not *be that promiſe*. For Moſes ſtood forth a mediator only between God, and the *Iſraelites*: whereas God's original promiſe was *univerſal*; it was that promiſe in which *all the nations of the earth* were to be bleſſed.

Is the law then inconſiſtent with the promiſes of God? 21.

By no means. The law did not pretend to juſtify. The whole 22.
world was under ſin, waiting for the redemption of Chriſt: and 23.
the Jewiſh part of it were prepared by their law for that redemption. The law therefore in fact, was only a kind of ſchool-maſter,

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14. Deut. xxi. 23.

20. *Now a mediator*, &c. There are two parties in every covenant. God, and all the nations of the earth, were the parties to the *covenant of promiſe*. Afterwards, in the *covenant of the law*, God, and the nation of the Jews were the parties. The covenant of the law therefore could not diſannul the covenant of grace, becauſe only one of the parties of that covenant was preſent, namely God. A mediator is between two parties, as the text ſays, but God is only one of thoſe parties.

24. 25. to lead us to the knowledge of Chriſt. After the attainment of
26. the end, the means are no longer neceſſary. All are now the
27. 28. children of God, through faith in Chriſt. Baptiſm is the bond
29. of this union. Diſtinctions are aboliſhed. All are become one
CHAP. IV. in Chriſt; in whom you, as well as the Jews, are the ſeed of
Abraham, and heirs of the promiſe.——Even we, who are the
1. 2. 3. natural deſcendants of that patriarch, conſider ourſelves, while we
continue under the legal diſpenſation, in the light only of children
4. 5. 6. 7. under the diſcipline of tutors, and guardians. The goſpel hath
now pronounced us of age. You alſo, who were before the ſer-
8. 9. 10. vants of ſin, are now adopted, together with us, into the ſame in-
heritance. In the days of your idolatry, you ſerved the only Gods,
you were acquainted with. But now, when you are the *adopted children* of the true God, whence is it, that you wiſh to put your-
11. 12. ſelves in *bondage* to the Jewiſh law? Let not my labours among
you be in vain: but follow my example.

As far as I am myſelf concerned, I have no ground of complaint
13. 14. 15. againſt you. Amidſt all my perſecutions, and infirmities, you have ever
16. treated me with the warmeſt affection. Do you then now conſider

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24. What is in this verſe, called *juſtification*, is in the 9th and 14th, called *a bleſſing*; in the 18th, an *inheritance*; in the 21ſt, *righteouſneſs*; in the ſame verſe *life*; and in the 22d, *a promiſe*.

27. The noble metaphor of the original, *have put on Chriſt*, is too bold to be inſerted in a tame expoſition. On becoming chriſtians, the apoſtle tells his converts, *they have put on Chriſt*.—They are cloathed with him—God, when he looks at them, ſees nothing, as it were, but Chriſt.

4. *His ſon made of a woman*, exactly correſponds with the original promiſe of a Redeemer—in the *ſeed of the woman*; not *of the man*. This can be ſaid of no perſon, but Chriſt. And the expreſſion, the *ſeed of the woman* is unparallelled in ſcripture.

6. St. Paul perhaps alludes to a cuſtom among the Jewiſh ſlaves, who were not allowed to uſe the titles of *abba*, and *imma* (father, and mother) to the maſter, and miſtreſs of a family. Theſe words had then a more inlarged meaning than with us.

13. What the particular infirmity was, of which the apoſtle ſpeaks, we know not: but, it is probable, he means, what he elſewhere calls *a thorn in the fleſh*: ſee 2 Cor. xii. 7.

me

me as an enemy, becauſe I ſpeak freely to you? Take care, leſt 17.
your new teachers mean only to exalt *themſelves* by infuſing pre-
judices againſt *us*. You have ſhewn your affection to me, when 18.
I have been with you: give me equal inſtances of it in my ab-
ſence.——For you I feel the pains of a ſecond birth; that you may 19.
become the children of grace.——Heartily do I wiſh to be preſent 20.
with you; that I might accommodate my diſcourſe to your real
circumſtances; for indeed I have my doubts about you.

But let me aſk you a queſtion. Will not you, who profeſs 21.
ſo great a reverence for the law, be influenced by it? There you 22.
read that Abraham had two ſons—one by a bond-maid; the other
by a free woman: and that the former was born in the ordinary 23.
courſe of nature; the latter, in conſequence of God's extraordinary
promiſe. This we interpret as an allegory. The bond-woman 24. 25.
repreſents the law; and the free-woman the goſpel. We chriſtians 26. 27. 28.
therefore, as Iſaac was, are accounted the children of the pro- 29.
miſe; and as ſuch we inherit the ill uſage, which Iſaac met with. 30.

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17. Ημας inſtead of υμας, as we find it in ſome copies, makes much better ſenſe.

20. In the original, it means, that *I might change my voice*—(αλλαξαι φωνη) that is, according to the matter, whether I commend, exhort, or threaten.

23. Gen. xviii.

24. St. Paul probably conſtructs this allegory on Iſaiah liv. 1.

29. This is commonly interpreted of the ill-uſage, which Iſaac received from Iſhmael; (Gen. xxi. 9) In what it conſiſted, we are not told. The ſhort Moſaic account only ſays, that *Iſhmael mocked*. But from the whole tenor of the hiſtory; and from the apoſtle's application of it here, we are led to ſuppoſe, the caſe to have been this.——Iſhmael had been brought up by his mother Hagar, under the notion of being *the child of promiſe*. Hagar herſelf was ſo exalted with this idea, that ſhe gave early offence to her miſtreſs Sarah by her behaviour. And tho ſhe appears to have been more decent afterwards; yet we may well ſuppoſe, ſhe never let the idea drop; and that it was alſo ſufficiently inſtilled into Iſhmael.——When therefore Iſaac was born, which was about thirteen, or fourteen years after the birth of Iſhmael, we may well conceive how great the diſappointment was; and that both the mother, and the ſon would be naturally inclined to ſhew their diſlike on all occaſions to the real heir of the promiſe.

But what faith the ſcripture? *Caſt out the bond-woman, and her ſon; for the ſon of the bond-woman ſhall not be heir with the ſon of*
31. *the free-woman.* So then, my brethren, we are not the children
CHAP. V. of the bond-woman, or the law; but are freed from it's obliga-
tion, by becoming the children of the free-woman, or the goſ-
1. pel.——Maintain therefore that liberty, which you have received
2. from Chriſt; and ſubmit not again to the yoke of bondage. While
you expect juſtification from circumciſion, you can never receive
3. 4. it from Chriſt. The law demands perfect obedience. He there-
fore, who expects juſtification on this ground, gives up all claim
5. 6. to it from grace; which is the chriſtian's peculiar hope. With
him circumciſion, and uncircumciſion are indifferent matters: the
only anchor, on which he reſts, is that faith, which produces real
love to God and man.

7. 8. You had once indeed juſt notions of religion. How is it, that
you have now loſt them? Not certainly through your firſt in-
9. 10. ſtructor.——But a little leaven will eaſily infect a large maſs. I
truſt in God however, that you will be reſtored to a right way
of thinking; and that the ſins of thoſe, who diſturb your faith,
may reſt on their own heads, not on yours.

11. Conſider the perſecutions I have met with from the Jews. Are
they not teſtimonies, think you, that I preach no Jewiſh doc-
12. trines?—I would to God, that every cauſe of ſeduction were re-
13. moved from you; and that you would conſider yourſelves as called
into a ſtate of liberty. Only ſuffer not your looſe affections to
take advantage of that liberty; but let your mutual love be ſhewn
14. in mutual good offices. For the whole moral law is fulfilled in

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7. *Ye do run well; who did hinder you?* Ετρεκετε, and ανεκοψε are Olympic expreſſions. Literally they ſignify, *You did run well; who croſſed, or confounded your courſe?*

13. The words, *I would they were even cut off,* allude probably to thoſe eccleſiaſtical cenſures of excommunication, which the apoſtle elſewhere calls, *delivering over to Satan.*

this

this one precept; *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf.* But if 15.
you are continually injuring each other, you provoke a return;
and a circulation of ill-offices of courſe ſucceeds. The *ſpirit of* 16.
the goſpel alone can ſecure you againſt theſe unruly affections: it
acts in continual oppoſition to them; and if you live under it's 17. 18.
bleſſed influence, you may be ſaid, in one ſenſe, to be above all
law.

But take care, again I beſeech you, that the gentle ſpirit of 19. 20. 21.
the goſpel lead you not into any impurities——take care, that your 22.
lives be not marked with any of thoſe deteſtable characters, which
mark the lives of the heathen—and that nothing either ſenſual,
or malevolent, may be ſeen among you. Pure charity, with all
it's attendant graces, are agreeable to every law. We chriſtians 23. 24.
ſhould crucify, with our Saviour, all our ſinful affections. If the 25.
Spirit gives us life, it ſhould of courſe guide our actions.

On the other hand, my brethren, I would not have you vain, 26.
and conceited; provoking each other by the affectation of ſuperior CHAP. VI.
piety: but if you obſerve any thing offenſive, let the offender be
rebuked with gentleneſs; conſidering, that you alſo yourſelves are 1.

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17. The apoſtle, in this verſe, deſcribes that internal conflict, which every true chriſtian muſt feel; and without which he ought not to ſuppoſe himſelf a chriſtian. The imperfections of this mortal ſtate can never be ſo intirely overcome, but that we muſt, if we are ſincere, feel in ourſelves this conflict. If we do not, we may fairly conclude, we are ſuffering ourſelves to be carried down the ſtream without reſiſtance.

19. The apoſtle had given the ſame caution in the 13th verſe; and not without great reaſon is the idea impreſſed: for we have often ſeen, both among ancient, and modern fanatics, a ſtrange mixture of *ſpiritual*, and *carnal* love.

20. Φαρμακεια ſignifies *poiſoning*, as well as *witchcraft*.

21. Κωμοι ſignifies thoſe *diſorderly revellings* ſo common among the Greeks.

22. Here all chriſtian graces are mentioned as *the fruits of the Spirit*. And no doubt every good diſpoſition is wrought in us by the Holy Spirit of God. Our own endeavours muſt undoubtedly be uſed. But if we believe the word of God, we muſt believe that his Holy Spirit will carry us to much greater heights of virtue, than any endeavours of our own. At the ſame time, this reflection will teach us humility.

liable

2. liable to temptation. Thus, like true chriſtians, kindly bear with
3. each other. He, who thinks the moſt highly of himſelf, may
have the greateſt reaſon to acknowledge, he hath been deceived.
4. But let every man examine *himſelf*; that he may have a real cauſe
5. for rejoicing; which a compariſon with another cannot furniſh:
for every man muſt anſwer for himſelf.

6. 7. 8. 9. Be properly obſervant of the wants of your teachers. God requires this mark of your ſincerity. As the huſbandman hath the recompence of his harveſt for his ſeed; ſo ſhall you from theſe
10. temporal things, reap ſpiritual. During the ſhort time we live in this world, we ſhould employ ourſelves in acts of kindneſs to all; but our fellow-chriſtians demand our particular attention.

11. You ſee how long a letter I have written to you with my own
12. hand: yet before I conclude, let me add, that they who would ſeduce you to the obſervances of the Jewiſh law, do it ſolely to
13. avoid perſecution for the ſake of the goſpel: for they themſelves, tho circumciſed, do not obſerve the law; but preſs circumciſion on you, merely that they may glory in having made you proſelytes.
14. But God forbid, that I ſhould glory in any thing, but in the croſs of Chriſt; through which the world is crucified unto me, and
15. I unto the world. As I juſt obſerved to you, circumciſion, and

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10. Chriſtians, at that time, were neglected by all people, but themſelves: it was neceſſary therefore for them to be more attentive to each other's wants.

11. Some critics tranſlate this verſe (as the words, they ſay, moſt properly import) *You ſee in what large letters I have written:* ſuppoſing that the apoſtle was not well ſkilled in the Greek character; and ſhewed his affection in writing in a language, which he wrote ſo uneaſily. Theophylact, Whitby, and Dodderidge are all of this opinion. I own I prefer the other interpretation: and indeed it appears improbable, that a man of ſo liberal an education, as St. Paul, born too in a Grecian city, and converſant in the Greek poets, ſhould be unſkilled in writing the Greek character.

12. The early emperors allowed the *Jews*, throughout the empire, to exerciſe their religion; and *circumciſed chriſtians* were conſidered as *Jews:* if *uncircumciſed*, they were perſecuted. This remark will throw great light on this text, and ſome others.

uncircumciſion

uncircumcision are indifferent matters. A thorough change of heart, and life is the only real badge of a christian; and where this is found, there will also be found the true Israelite; and the peace of God will rest upon him. 16.

Let no one then for the future, injuriously suspect me of judaizing. The persecutions I daily suffer, and have suffered, are sufficient testimonies of my fidelity to Christ. 17.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, my brethren. Amen! 18.

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17. Some interpreters suppose, the apostle alludes here to scars, or marks from ill usage on his own body; which might be said to resemble those brands, with which soldiers, or slaves, were often marked.

END OF THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

P R E F A C E

TO

St. Paul's Epistle to the EPHESIANS.

THO the authenticity of this epiſtle hath never been diſputed; a queſtion (rather indeed of modern, than of ancient date) hath ariſen about it's inſcription; ſome contending, that it ſhould have been inſcribed to the Laodiceans. But Dr. Lardnr, among others, hath ſaid enough to reſtore it's ancient title.

The apoſtle's deſign, in this epiſtle, is, firſt, to ſhew the great end of the goſpel—that it was intended to be preached to all mankind—and that he was appointed the preacher of it to the Gentiles.——From hence he proceeds to exhort his converts againſt the practices, in which they had formerly lived; and which, as chriſtians, they had renounced; fraud, and deceit of every kind; and the pollutions of the world.—He next touches on relative duties; and concludes with arraying his converts in the armour of a chriſtian.

The great ſcope therefore of the whole is, firſt, to inculcate the doctrines of the goſpel——and ſecondly, the duties of it.

This is ſuppoſed to be the firſt epiſtle, which St. Paul wrote, after he had been brought to Rome, on his appeal to Cæſar.

EPISTLE

TO THE

EPHESIANS.

CHAP. I.

PAUL, an apoſtle by the will of God, to the church of Epheſus, grace, mercy, and peace!

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. Bleſſed be God, who hath called us to the hope of everlaſting life, and adopted us, before the foundation of the world, to be his children in Jeſus Chriſt†. With what gratitude ſhould we conſider this great act of mercy; and for ever praiſe that gracious Being, who

10. in his eternal goodneſs hath declared a method of forgiving the ſin of man

† Some expreſſions in the 4th, 5th, and 11th verſes, are among thoſe, which chiefly give occaſion to many unguarded things, which have been ſaid on the doctrine of predeſtination. In thoſe paſſages, I think, nothing is more evident, than that the apoſtle has not the leaſt reference to the caſe of *particular* perſons; but only *in general* to Jews and Gentiles; which latter God had determined, from the foundation of the world, in his own good time, to *elect*, or admit to all the bleſſings of the goſpel. The apoſtle indeed (ver. 4) ſays *we*, tho he is ſpeaking of the Gentiles.—Mr. Lock has a very long, and uſeful note on this paſſage, in which he ſhews plainly, that "St. Paul, who was the apoſtle of the Gentiles, did often, in "an obliging manner, join himſelf with the Gentile converts, under the terms *us*, and *we*, "as if he had been one of them." See Mr. Lock's note on this paſſage.

10. We do not perhaps underſtand the full force of the words, *which are in heaven, and which are in earth.* Some underſtand by them, *Jews and Gentiles*; others the *dead and living*; but the nobleſt idea, I think, is this—The angelic and human nature were once in harmony, and in ſubjection

man through the death of a Saviour—a dispensation not partially distributed; but taking place immediately on the fall; and comprehending the whole race of mankind. The Jews were first called: afterwards the Gentiles; who may be assured, from receiving the *same gifts* of the Spirit, that they have received also the *same inheritance, and redemption.* 11. 12. 13. 14.

It is the constant subject of my prayers, and thankfulness, that you may continue in union with Christ; and that your minds may be inlightened more and more by contemplating the greatness of this dispensation; and the wonderful events, especially of the resurrection, and exaltation of Christ, whereby God hath united unto himself, the whole race of mankind in one, vast, comprehensive scheme of salvation. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23.

CHAP. II.

Remember then, that abyss of darkness, from which you have been delivered—that state of sin, and corruption, in which you once lived; and then consider that state, to which you are now raised. Christ's resurrection is an earnest of yours—of that double resurrection, first from sin; and secondly to eternal life; which is through the goodness of God, your promised inheritance. Consider it therefore always as the gift of God's goodness. Claim nothing on your own merits; but all from the grace of God, in Christ; 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

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jection to the Son of God. Man afterwards becoming disobedient broke off from this great society, till in the fulness of time, *God gathered together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth.* I have not however expressed this idea in the exposition, as it is not the interpretation most generally received.

13. Acts xi. 17.

19. 20. Mr. Lock, and others observe, and I think, with great appearance of truth, that the apostle seems labouring in these verses, to express the greatness of his ideas: τι το υπερβαλλον μεγεθος της δυναμεως αυτου εις ημας του πιστευοντας κατα την ενεργειαν του κρατους της ισχυος αυτου.

21. These abstract names *principality, power, might,* &c. signify, in the eastern language, those who are invested with them.

2. The Jews had a notion that the air was inhabited by evil spirits; and Mr. Mede thinks, St. Paul favoured that opinion.

through faith in whom you are enabled to perform works acceptable to Him.

11. 12. 13. 14. Remember alſo, that you are now equally admitted with the Jews to all the bleſſings of the goſpel. Tho you were before ignorant even of the firſt principles of religion, you are now raiſed to a level with the peculiar people of God. All thoſe rites, and ceremonies are aboliſhed, which diſtinguiſhed the Jew from the Gentile. Both are reconciled to God in Chriſt. To both the goſpel of peace is preached; and through the ſame Spirit both have equal acceſs to the Father. You are therefore no longer foreigners; but members of the church of Chriſt—that univerſal church, founded upon prophets, and apoſtles, in which Jeſus Chriſt himſelf is the chief corner-ſtone; and in which God, by his Holy Spirit, will now dwell; as he once inhabited the temple of the Jews.

15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22.

CHAP. III. The adoption of the Gentiles is one of the great doctrines, which I am commiſſioned to preach; and for preaching which I am now a priſoner. From God this office was aſſigned me. From that great ſource of truth, I, unworthy as I am, was commiſſioned to tell the Gentile world (what they had no conception of before) that they are heirs with the Jews, in all the promiſes of the goſpel. I am commiſſioned alſo to explain to them the nature of thoſe holy promiſes; and of their acceſs to the Father through faith; which great ſcheme of religion, tho propoſed from the beginning of the

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12.

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12. *Having no hope:* that is no influencing hope, for ſome hope the heathen had.

14. *The middle wall of partition,* alludes to the wall, which ſeparated the court of the Gentiles from the interior of the Jewiſh temple.

18. The word προσαγωγη alludes to the cuſtom of introducing ſtrangers into the preſence of a prince.

20. Some ſuppoſe, that St. Paul in this, and in other paſſages, in which he alludes to architecture, accommodates himſelf to the taſte of the Greeks, among whom architecture was in ſuch eſteem.

4. St. Paul often ſpeaks of the calling of the Gentiles, as a myſtery.

world,

world, is now firſt revealed; to the wonder, and juſt aſtoniſhment of all the intelligent part of the creation of God.

Conſider my ſufferings therefore as the ſource of your advantages. 13. 14. 15.
I thank God they are. I repine not at them. I bow my knees to the Father of heaven, and earth, intreating him to perfect his work; 16. 17.
and by his bleſſed influence to form in your hearts the true goſpel-ſpirit of faith and love. I pray, God give you as full, and com- 18. 19. 20. 21.
prehenſive a knowledge of chriſtianity, as we mortals can attain! and fill your minds with his wonderful mercies, and goodneſs through Chriſt; for which every thought of our hearts ſhould be impreſſed with gratitude and praiſe!

CHAP. IV.

Let me then beſeech you, to make your lives anſwerable to your 1. 2. 3.
profeſſion; and to live with that meekneſs, and unity among each 4. 5.
other, which becomes chriſtians. You all form one body; are 6.
directed by the ſame Spirit; have one hope; and one Saviour; one 7.
faith; one baptiſm; and one God, the common Father of all.— 8.
It is true, in this great body, there are various diſtributions of God's grace; to which the holy pſalmiſt alludes, when mentioning the Meſſiah's triumphant aſcenſion, he ſpeaks of his *giving gifts to* 9. 10.
men, (which by the way, is a proof of the reality of Chriſt's death; for if he roſe, and aſcended; he muſt firſt have died, and been

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18. *The breadth, and length, and depth, and height.* This text is often taken notice of, as very expreſſive. Bodies have only three dimenſions, *breadth, length and depth*; but the apoſtle meaſures the laſt as it were back again, from the *depth* to the *height*; expreſſing, the *depth* from which we are delivered; and the *height* to which we are again exalted.

11. Pſ. lxviii. 18.

9. 10. There is great difficulty in the connection of theſe verſes. I have given Mr. Lock's interpretation, which ſeems to me the beſt.—The unbelieving Jews, it is certain, would not hear of the death of the Meſſiah; and uſed to urge the abſurdity of it to the Gentiles. St. Paul, in this very epiſtle, dwells upon the neceſſity of it (II. 13. 14. 15. 16) and here having produced a text of ſcripture for another purpoſe; he juſt, by the way, applies it to that argument.

buried:)

11. buried:) ſome he appointed prophets, others evangeliſts and teachers;
12. 13. 14. all of whom are neceſſary to eſtabliſh the church—to oppoſe errors—
15. 16. and to compleat the great ſcheme of chriſtianity.

17. Let me exhort you therefore, as members of this great body, to
18. lay aſide all the ſinful errors of your paſt lives. While you were
19. involved in blindneſs, and ignorance, you were polluted with every
20. 21. 22. 23. 24. kind of wickedneſs, and ſenſuality. Remember the profeſſions you have made as chriſtians, that you would throw off your old habits,
25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. and become new men. All groſſer ſins againſt your neighbour—falſhood—theft—exceſſive anger—corrupt converſation—malice—and bitterneſs of every kind, are I hope, among the firſt heathen practices
31. 32. you relinquiſh. Be gentle therefore, and merciful, and kind to each other; imitating that Saviour, who died to redeem you; and that God, who hath forgiven your ſins.

CHAP. V.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. Let all impurity likewiſe be avoided, as well as ſins againſt your neighbour. The philoſopher of this word may excuſe impure practices under the name of natural inclinations. But aſſure yourſelves
8. they are utterly inconſiſtent with the kingdom of Chriſt. Suffer

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13. 14. 15. 16. I have in theſe verſes, agreeably to the method I follow, juſt given the ſcope, and connection of what appears to me the apoſtle's argument; but I cannot paſs by, without remark, that beautiful, and pleaſing compariſon, which he makes between the growth of a chriſtian, and the natural growth of the human body, "*We are no more children, the ſport of paſſions, and prey of deſigning men: but we grow up in Him, from whom the whole body is joined together, and compacted by that which every joint ſupplieth, making increaſe, according to the effectual working of every part; till we come, in the unity of the faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man—unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt.*"

24. St. Paul often ſpeaks of the *redemption* of man through Chriſt, as producing a *new creation*. Κτιϛθεντα is here uſed in that ſenſe. Again, in 2 Cor. v. 17. καινη κτισις has the ſame meaning. Again in Gal. vi. 15. and in other places.

3. By πλεονεξια, in this verſe, inordinate deſires ſeem to be meant. See Dr. Hammond on this place, and Parkhurſt's lexicon.——So in the 5th verſe, the word *covetous* ſhould be an *unclean perſon*. As lewdneſs and idolatry were ſo much practiſed together by the heathen, they are often brought together by the apoſtle.

not

not yourſelves again therefore to be involved in that darkneſs, from which you have been delivered. You have now a glorious light to direct you. But if it does not ſhew you, that all Gentile im- 9.
purities are intirely oppoſite to the ſpirit of the goſpel, you are yet in darkneſs. Nothing but a direct oppoſition to theſe can 10.
make you acceptable to God. Abhor therefore all ſuch impurities; 11. 12. 13.
which it offends decency even to mention: and conſider your- 14.
ſelves as called by the great prophetic voice, "Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee light." Leave therefore the folly of this world to it's children; and ac- 15. 16. 17.
commodate yourſelves to the wiſdom of the next. Too much of your time hath already been ſpent in ſin: be the more earneſt to improve what is left. Let the heathen have recourſe to riot, and 18. 19. 20.
intemperance in their joys: let yours ſpring from a purer ſource—gratitude, and thankfulneſs to God; that true melody of the heart, which nothing earthly can raiſe.

Let forbearance, humility, and a general ſubmiſſion of your 21.
inclinations, and humours to each other, reign among you.

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12. The apoſtle is here probably alluding to the myſteries of the heathen; their απορρητα; and ſome have obſerved a ſarcaſm in what he ſays. He calls them things *not to be ſpoken of*—but not becauſe they were too *ſacred*; but too *infamous*.

14. It is probable the apoſtle alludes to ſeveral paſſages in the prophet Iſaiah, which bear this ſenſe; tho none of them exactly in theſe words. The paſſage moſt ſimilar is chap. xxvi. 19. But the apoſtolic writers often quote from memory, and obſerve the ſenſe, rather than the words.

16. Almoſt all interpreters conſider this verſe *(redeeming the time, becauſe the days are evil)* as a leſſon of worldly prudence. Perſecution will ariſe againſt you, therefore act diſcretely. But I own I cannot ſee any connection between this ſenſe, and the context.—Beſides, it ſeems to be an unneceſſary leſſon. The converts, to whom this advice is directed, were ſo far from diſcovering too intemperate a zeal for religion; that the apoſtle found it neceſſary to caution them even againſt Jewiſh rites, and heathen abominations.

18. 19. Many interpreters ſuppoſe the apoſtle is here alluding to the Bacchanalian orgies; and that he preſcribed pſalms, and hymns, inſtead of the wild, and frantic ſongs, which were ſung in thoſe proceſſions.

Let

22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. Let the married ſtate be obſerved with all ſanctity; and be conſidered as an emblem of the ſacred union between Chriſt, and his church—of that love and tenderneſs, which flows from one; and of that ſubmiſſion and reſpect, which are due from the other. †

CHAP. VI.

1. 2. 3. 4. Let the duties of children and parents be mutually obſerved. If the former are taught obedience; let the latter lay a foundation for it, in gentleneſs, and religious inſtruction.

5. 6. 7. 8. Let the ſervant obey his maſter, not on any worldly principle; but under a ſenſe of his duty to God, from whom he expects his

9. recompence.——On the other hand, let not the maſter think himſelf free from obligation: but let him behave on all occaſions with humanity to his ſervant; conſidering that he alſo has a Maſter in heaven, who is no reſpecter of perſons.

10. To conclude, my brethren, exert ſtrenuouſly thoſe endeavours,

11. 12. which will be further aided by the divine grace. You have not only the oppoſition of wicked men to combat; but muſt expect

13. alſo the oppoſition of wicked ſpirits. Put on therefore that divine armour, which the goſpel hath provided. It will ſerve you in every exigence. Let truth, honeſty, and ſincerity ſurround you

14. like a military belt. Let a good conſcience be your breaſt-plate;

15. and a peaceable diſpoſition, like greaves, defend your ſteps. But

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† The apoſtle dilates ſomewhat more on this alluſion. Two things ſeem evidently to have ſtruck his attention. He ſeems at firſt to have had nothing in view, but to exhort men to *love their wives*, as *Chriſt loved the church:* but being ſtruck with this latter idea, which contains the greater truth of the two, he carries on the ſimilitude farther, than he at firſt ſeems to have intended.

2. If this be the *firſt commandment with promiſe*, ſays the Popiſh caſuiſt, then it is plain the ſecond commandment of the decalogue, in which there is a promiſe likewiſe, ſhould be abrogated.—May we not, with rather leſs violence, ſuppoſe the apoſtle means here, a *particular*, or *ſpecial* promiſe? The declaration in the ſecond commandment, that *God will ſhew mercy to thouſands that love him, and keep his commandments*, is not ſpecific; but expreſſed in general terms. It relates to *all* the commands of God in general.

9. *Forbearing threatning*—that is, forbearing that domineering, haughty language, which is ſo contrary to the ſpirit of the goſpel.

let

let the ſhield of faith—a firm belief in the truths of religion—
be your great ſecurity againſt every attack. Crown all with the 17.
helmet of ſalvation—the hope of everlaſting life: and for your
offenſive arms, take the word of God, which is the ſword of 18.
the Spirit.—In uſing theſe divine arms, add conſtant prayer to God
for yourſelves, and others. And forget not me your apoſtle in 19. 20.
your prayers; who am ſuffering impriſonment for your ſake, that
I may plead the cauſe of the goſpel boldly as I ought.

With regard to all particulars relating to myſelf, I refer you 21. 22.
to Tychicus, a faithful miniſter of Chriſt, who brings you this
epiſtle, and will anſwer all your queſtions.

Peace and love be among you all; and the grace of God upon 23. 24.
all his faithful ſervants!

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16. *Quench all the fiery darts.* The apoſtle alludes to miſſile weapons, often uſed, with burning flax wrapped about them.

18. Bp. Wilkins in his treatiſe on prayer p. 39, explains the expreſſion, *watching thereunto with all perſeverance*, &c. as an inſtruction to take every opportunity of reading, meditation, company, &c. to gather up conſtantly proper materials for prayer; which is an *excellent leſſon* to a chriſtian, whatever may become of the *interpretation*.

19. *That utterance may be given me*; ſee a note on 2 Cor. xii. 7, and Gal. iv. 13.

END OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

PREFACE

TO THE

EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

THIS epiſtle was written from Rome to the chriſtians of Philippi, a city of Macedonia, about the year 62, as is generally ſuppoſed, a little before St. Paul was ſet at liberty. It was ſent by Epaphroditus, by whom the apoſtle had received a contribution from his friends at that place.

He begins, after a ſalutation full of tenderneſs, and kindneſs, to ſatisfy their queſtions about his preſent ſituation at Rome. He aſſures them of his perfect reſignation——ſpeaks of his deliverance, as a matter of great uncertainty; but rather believes, that it is God's good pleaſure, it ſhould take place. He then exhorts them to purity of life—cautions them againſt Jewiſh zealots—and kindly accepts the ſupplies they had ſent him.

EPISTLE

TO THE

PHILIPPIANS.

CHAP I.

1. 2. PAUL, and Timothy, miniſters of Chriſt, to the biſhops, deacons, and whole chriſtian church at Philippi; grace and peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt!

3. 4. 5. 6. Your advancement in the goſpel from your firſt converſion till this time, is the conſtant ſubject of my thankfulneſs to God; who will, I doubt not, preſerve you ſteady in that faith, which you have embraced, till the great day of Chriſt. I have every reaſon

7. to hope this of you, as, through the grace of God, you have been partakers with me in defending, and confirming the goſpel; and have kindly adminiſtered to me in all thoſe ſufferings, which I

8. have undergone for it's ſake. God knows the love I bear you;

9. and the earneſt prayers I make, that you may increaſe in all chriſtian

10. 11. love, and knowledge; and that being fully convinced of the excellence of that holy faith, which you have embraced, you may abound more, and more, in the fruits it produces to the glory of God; and be found innocent, and ſincere members of the church of Chriſt, in the day of his glorious appearance.

Let

Let me now anſwer your inquiries, by aſſuring you, that whatever hath happened to me, hath had a tendency to advance the goſpel. 12. The occaſion of my being ſent here a priſoner is now well known even in the emperor's court; 13. and hath excited the zeal of many to ſtand forth in the defence of the goſpel. 14. I wiſh I could ſpeak as favourably of all. 15. 16. 17. But while there are many ſincere preachers of God's word, who conſider me as a ſuffering miniſter in his cauſe; I muſt add, there are others, who preach in oppoſition to me; mixing Jewiſh ceremonies with the goſpel; and are not with-held by knowing the diſtreſs they give me.—— *Some* good effect may however ariſe from ſuch preaching; and ſo far it will always be matter of joy to me. 18.

As to my preſent ſufferings, I have no doubt, but I ſhall always have reaſon to conſider them through your prayers, and the direction of the Holy Spirit, as the means of my happineſs. 19. 20. I hope alſo, that I ſhall perſevere with ſuch firmneſs, that the goſpel of Chriſt ſhall be advanced either by my life, or death. 21. If I live, I live in Chriſt: if I die, I die in hope of everlaſting mercy; and of ſetting the ſeal of martyrdom to the truth of the goſpel. 22. Suffering it is true awaits me here: yet ſtill my choice is divided. To be removed to Chriſt, is my ſecret wiſh: but it may be more advantageous to the churches I have planted, to continue longer upon earth. 23. 24. And indeed I have perſuaſion, that this is God's deſtination; 25. and that I ſhall fulfill that joy, which you expreſs in the hope of ſeeing me again. 26.

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15. The apoſtle does not expreſs whom he meant by theſe oppoſers. But it is generally ſuppoſed he meant the Jewiſh converts. The words, ουχ αγνως, in the ſixteenth verſe, ſeems to imply ſome *impure mixture*; and Judaiſm was the principal mixture, we know of, that prevailed at that time. In other parts of the epiſtle alſo the apoſtle ſeems to have alluſion to the Jews. See particularly the beginning of chap. iii.

21. If the original be pointed, with a comma after Χριστος, the ſenſe will be, *For Chriſt to me, both in life and death, is gain.*

In

27. In the mean time, let your lives be ſuch as become the goſpel of Chriſt; that whether I ſee you, or hear of you only in my abſence, I may find that you live in happy unity together; and have emulation in nothing, but in paying obedience to the precepts of the goſpel.

28. Nor let any worldly fears, nor worldly adverſaries diſcompoſe you. The oppoſition of your enemies marks their hard, and impenitent hearts; but brightens your hopes in the mercies of God;
29. 30. purifying your religious principles, as I hope in God it hath done mine, by adding ſuffering to faith.

CHAP. II. If therefore you have any conſolation in Chriſt—any comfort in love—any joy in the Holy Spirit; and in the mercies of God—
1. 2. compleat my hopes in you by continuing in the exerciſe of chriſtian
3. charity. Let nothing be done through ſtrife, or vain glory; but
4. in humility of mind, let each eſteem his neighbour better than himſelf; and in every thing conſider his neighbour's intereſt, as
5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. his own. Let each of you imitate the example of your bleſſed Saviour, who took upon himſelf the lowly form of man; and ſuffered death upon the croſs; tho he was before equal with God;
12. and was afterwards to be exalted to the higheſt ſtate of glory. While you were under my eye, your religious conduct was ever pleaſing to me: let it be equally ſo in my abſence. Conform your actions,

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5. I give what appears to me to be the *primary, and argumentative* purport of theſe verſes; which was to recommend *humility* and *charity* by the example of Chriſt. The difficulties they contain, I have not entered into; hardly any two commentators agreeing in the ſame preciſe meaning. The expreſſion, ουχ αρπαγμον ηγησατο το ειναι ισα θεω, *he thought it not robbery to be equal to God*, is generally explained, as if he did not covet or deſire to appear on earth in the divine glory. See Whitby, and Pyle.—The expreſſion, *God hath highly exalted him*, is ſuppoſed to refer to the exaltation of Chriſt's *human nature*—his *divine nature* being *in the form of God*.—But perhaps there is no great wiſdom in examining too deeply into theſe high points, which muſt for ever be above us. *Neſcire velle, quæ magiſter optimus neſcire nos vult, erudita naſcitia eſt.*

with

with caution, and godly fear, to the precepts of the gospel. At the same time be assured, that God's Holy Spirit will never fail 13. to assist your endeavours. Be particularly careful to suffer no harshness, nor animosity of any kind to enter into your disputes—that 14. 15. your adversaries may throw as little imputation as possible upon you—and that you may at least be considered as blameless, and irreproachable among those, who will always be ready to take hold of every thing in their power; in the midst of whom I wish you to shine as lights in the world: so that having passed your christian 16. pilgrimage upon earth, I may rejoice in the day of Christ, at the success of my ministry among you. Nay if I should even now be 17. 18. offered up as a sacrifice for my labours in the gospel, I, as well as you, ought to make it matter of joy.

I trust in Christ, that I shall soon be able to send Timothy to 19. Philippi, through whom I shall obtain some certain intelligence of 20. you. I have no one here, on whom I can equally depend. I see 21. among all too much attachment to themselves; and too little to 22.

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13. It seems to be the constant doctrine of scripture, (expressed in this verse among other passages) that the Spirit of God, in a manner, makes a part of us, and is disposed to act uniformly upon all mankind, who use the means prescribed in scripture to obtain this powerful aid; among which fervent prayer is the chief.—How far God may favour his faithful servants in their *exigences* with *particular aids*, we know not. In *general*, however it seems to be the language, rather of enthusiasm, than of reason, and scripture, that the Holy Spirit of God assists us by partial, desultory illapses. But as we are told, that *without God we can do no good thing*, it seems probable that the Spirit of God is never intirely quenched in the breasts even of the worst of men. If it was, they could never repent.—We are told in the text, to *work out our salvation with fear and trembling, because it is God that worketh in us*. The reason is plain, lest by our *not working for ourselves*, we should lose the assistance of God, which will decay, more, and more, as we neglect the gracious admonitions of the Holy Spirit.—As to the phrase, that *God worketh in us to will, and to do of his good pleasure*, it appears, from the whole sense of the passage, that he does not act in an arbitrary manner, (for then it would be absurd for us to work ourselves) but only, that it is his good pleasure, that he works for us at all.

15. *Shine as lights*. The word φωστηρ, *retained light*, I believe, is commonly used to express that kind of light, which is intended to direct mariners.

the

23. 24. the gospel. But he with the affection of a child, hath been dutifully attentive to me, as you have often had opportunity to observe. I shall wait however to see what will be the event of my trial here; and if I cannot come myself, I shall send him.

25. In the mean time, I thought it proper to send back to you, your messenger, Epaphroditus with this letter, who has delivered your supplies safely to me; and whom I consider as my fellow-
26. labourer, and a minister to me from you. He has been greatly
27. distressed at finding you had heard of his sickness. He hath indeed been so ill, that his life was despaired of: but it hath pleased God to restore him, which I consider as an act of mercy to me, as well as
28. to him. I send him therefore the more speedily, that you may not wait long in suspence; and that I may also rejoice the sooner in
29. your joy at seeing him. I need not exhort you to receive him
30. joyfully; and to treat him, and all such pastors, with respect. He hath hazarded his life for Christ's sake, in the execution of your kind commission to assist me.

CHAP. III. Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord.——And yet before
1. 2. I conclude, let me exhort you again, as it may make a stronger impression, not to suffer yourselves to be misled by those Jewish zealots, who would inforce circumcision, as necessary to salvation:
3. but to consider the church of Christ, as the true church of God; which, instead of placing any confidence in outward ceremonies,
4. trusts in Jesus Christ alone, and worships God in truth. No man surely can have more reason to trust in Jewish privileges than I have.

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27. From circumstances of this kind, we see the apostles had not always inherent in them the power of healing the sick: otherwise it might be supposed, that Paul would have healed this useful minister of the church.

28. Σπουδαιοτερως, is rendered better by *hastily*, or *speedily*, than *carefully*.

1. It seems as if the apostle had intended to conclude his epistle here. His saying, he proposed to send away Epaphroditas σπουδαιοτερως, seems to imply it. But the idea of the Jewish zealots intervening, carries him farther into length.

I was

I was born, initiated, and educated in the Jewiſh church with every circumſtance of exactneſs. I afterward, embraced one of it's ſtricteſt 6.
ſects; and oppoſing all it's adverſaries, was a moſt rigid obſerver of it's ceremonies. But theſe things, on which I once ſo greatly valued 7.
myſelf, I now totally reject, for the ſake of the goſpel. Every 8.
thing I conſider as trifling in the compariſon. All I had in the world I gave up for Chriſt; giving up alſo every idea of acceptance 9.
through the Moſaic law; truſting ſolely in the promiſes of the goſpel— 10.
acknowledging the amazing truth of Chriſt's reſurrection—and following his bleſſed ſteps, that I might through him, riſe again to a 11.
glorious immortality. The prize is ſet before me. I have not yet 12. 13. 14.
attained it. I am not yet perfected. But I keep my eye fixed on the great end. I forget every thing behind; and looking ſteadily at the point before me, I preſs towards the mark—that glorious mark of eternal life, which the goſpel preſents.

Let me exhort you all therefore to adhere firmly to this truth— 15.
that ſalvation depends only on the goſpel. But if any have not yet gotten intirely over his Jewiſh ſcruples, let him not be diſcouraged: God will, by degrees, remove them. Let thoſe, in the 16.
mean time, whoſe faith is purer, continue ſteadily in it; following 17.
the example, which we, and their other paſtors, have ſet them. 18.
Thus while they, who are enemies of the croſs of Chriſt (whom I have often with great diſtreſs mentioned to you) ſpend their lives 19.
in worldly gratifications, to which they are totally given up; let us have our converſation in heaven; expecting that great day, 20.
when theſe vile bodies ſhall take a glorious form; and through the 21.
power of God be totally rendered ſubſervient to him.——Let this CHAP. IV.
great conſideration weigh with you to continue firm in the faith 1.

8. *Suffered the loſs of all things.* The original word reſpects chiefly that kind of loſs, which mariners ſuffer, when they throw their goods into the ſea, to ſave their lives.

2. you have profeſſed. To Euodias, and Syntyche in particular I
3. direct this exhortation. I beſeech alſo my worthy colleague, together with Clement, and others my faithful fellow-labourers in the goſpel, to aſſiſt theſe women, who have ſhewn ſuch piety in their ſervices to us.

4. I now again conclude, exhorting you to rejoice in the Lord,
5. under all your diſtreſſes. Let your moderation be evident to all. Every controverſy will ſoon be carried from an earthly to a heavenly
6. tribunal. Be not therefore anxious about worldly affairs; but lay all
7. your requeſts before God, never omitting thankſgiving for paſt mercies. And may the peace of God, which can be felt only, not deſcribed, keep both your affections, and your underſtanding in a
8. bleſſed compoſure through Chriſt! For the ſake of all thoſe virtues, which adorn the chriſtian profeſſion, think deeply of theſe things; and let me have the happineſs of hoping, that both my precepts,
9. and example have tended to impreſs them upon you.

10. Your kind care in adminiſtering to my neceſſities (which I well know would have exerted itſelf ſooner, if an earlier opportunity had fallen out) hath afforded me great matter of religious joy. I
11. value it more as an inſtance of your affection, than as a ſupply of my wants. As to myſelf, I have learned in whatever ſtate I am, to
12. 13. be content. Through Chriſt, that ſtrengthens me, I am prepared

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2. Theſe two women might probably live in Jewiſh families; or their relations might be judaizing chriſtians; or they might be connected with heathen families.

3. It is not well known whom the apoſtle means by the phraſe *true yoke-fellow*. To ſay he means his wife, as ſome have ſaid, is abſurd; as he himſelf tells us he was unmarried.

3. *Whoſe names are in the book of life.* We need not ſuppoſe, that St. Paul literally means theſe perſons to be beyond a poſſibility of falling: but only that their preſent behaviour was ſuch, as was acceptable to God; and would inſure their ſalvation, if they perſevered in it.

4. See chap. iii. 1, and the note——The ſenſe would be ſtronger, if the pauſe in the original were placed after χαιρω. It would then be, *Rejoice in the Lord: I ſay always rejoice.*

for

for every adverſity. But ſtill your kindneſs is very pleaſing to me, 14. 15. 16.
as it was alſo at Theſſalonica: for ſince I left Macedonia, I have
received no aſſiſtance from any church, but yours. Yet I value 17.
it not ſo much, as I ſaid, becauſe it afforded a ſupply to my wants;
as becauſe it was a grateful inſtance of your love. Aſſure your- 18.
ſelves, that what you have ſent by Epaphroditus, is a ſufficient
ſupply for all my neceſſities: and, what is more, a ſacrifice accep- 19.
table to God; from whom you are to look for your return in the 20.
mercies of the goſpel; and to whom for all his tender care to us,
be attributed all glory, and honour, for ever, and ever, Amen!

Salute all the brethren, who are with you; and receive the 21. 22.
ſalutation of all here, particularly of our brethren in Cæſar's court.

The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you all, Amen! 23.

END OF THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

PREFACE

TO THE

EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

THIS epiſtle is ſuppoſed to have been written about the time, when the epiſtle to the Philippians was written; a little before the apoſtle's releaſe from his impriſonment at Rome; and it appears to have been ſent at the ſame time, with the epiſtle to Philemon.

St. Paul firſt expreſſes his joy at the favourable accounts he had received of the perſeverance, and piety of the Coloſſian church. He then enlarges upon the mercies of redemption—and cautions his readers againſt deceivers—againſt judaizing principles; and other ſpecies of falſe doctrine. He draws a picture of chriſtians acting uniformly under the influence of the goſpel, both in their public, and private capacities; and concludes with general inſtructions, and ſalutations.

EPISTLE

TO THE

COLOSSIANS.

CHAP. I.

1. 2. PAUL, an apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, by the appointment of God, and Timothy, to the chriſtian church at Coloſſe, grace, and peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt!

3. 4. Ever ſince I heard of your faith in Chriſt; and of that charity, which it produced among you, I have given thanks to God; and have offered up my conſtant prayers for your advancement in all

5. 6. holineſs. You have now attained that heavenly hope in the goſpel; which hath wrought in you, as it hath in others, who have

7. embraced it, the fruits of righteouſneſs; ever ſince it was preached

8. to you by our beloved Epaphras, who hath been a faithful miniſter among you; and hath made me happy by a recital of that chriſtian

9. 10. charity, which on all occaſions you diſcover. It is the conſtant ſubject therefore of my prayers to God, that you may abound more

11. and more in all chriſtian knowledge—and in the virtues of a holy life: that being ſtrengthened by the hand of God, you may be enabled to bear with patience the trials of the world.

12. 13. 14. In every thing therefore give thanks to God; but particularly for his having delivered you from heathen darkneſs—for your redemption

demption through Chriſt—the forgiveneſs of your ſins—and the proſpect before you of everlaſting happineſs.

Conſider then with reverence the great work of your redemp- 15.
tion—who hath performed it; and what hath been performed.——
The author of this great work is no leſs than the Son of God,
the image of the inviſible Father, exiſting before all creation. By 16. 17.
him all things in heaven, and earth were created: and through
him they are preſerved. It is this great Saviour, who is the head 18.
of the chriſtian church; and who by his reſurrection from the
dead, hath ſhewn his power over death; thus giving us the aſſurance 19.
of immortality. For it hath pleaſed God to inveſt him with full
power; and to accept his death on the croſs, as the means of re- 20.
conciling to himſelf all created beings both in heaven, and on
earth.——Of this bleſſed ſociety you now make a part. Tho 21. 22.
once alienated from God by your wickedneſs; you are now recon-
ciled to him, in purity, and holineſs, through the death of Chriſt;
if you ſteadily perſevere in that faith, which you have received; 23.
and in that hope, which hath been ſet before you.

For myſelf, who am graciouſly appointed by God, the miniſter 24.
of the goſpel, I can truly ſay, I rejoice in the ſufferings, which
I undergo for it's ſake; and in compleating thoſe prophecies, which
foretold that the ſervants of Chriſt, ſhould ſuffer after his death.
My commiſſion indeed reaches chiefly to you, the Gentile part 25. 26.
of that church, to whom I open the redemption of the world by
Chriſt—a myſtery hitherto kept ſecret from mankind; but now
revealed to all, both Jews, and Gentiles; to whom God is pleaſed 27.
to make known his gracious intention of offering ſalvation to all

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15. Eraſmus, and other commentators, do not tranſlate πρωτοτοκος the *firſt-born*, but the *firſt producer*.

24. This is the interpretation, which Dr. Clarke gives of this verſe. See his ſermons, vol. I. p. 274.

through

28. through Jesus Christ. This holy gospel I have preached; warning the disobedient not to reject so kind an offer—instructing the
29. pious in that heavenly wisdom, which will lead them to everlasting
CHAP. II. life—and exercising among you those spiritual gifts, with which God for this purpose hath endowed me.——For you, and the
1. church of Laodicea; and all, among whom I have not personally
2. preached the gospel, I am under particular anxiety: wishing you all spiritual comfort from the exercise of charity among yourselves—from a perfect knowledge of the religion you have embraced—
3. and from a liberty to profess openly the name of Christ; in whom the divine power, and knowledge equally reside.

4. Take care therefore lest you be seduced by artful, and worldly
5. men. For tho I am absent from you, my heart is continually with you; and I have a constant eye over your faith, and manners.
6. 7. Persevere in your profession. Trust only in Christ for all your hopes of pardon, and future happiness; with all thankfulness receiving the inestimable blessing, which God hath vouchsafed unto
8. you. In a particular manner, let me warn you against the reasonings, and philosophy of men; which will only lead you into vain, and unprofitable disquisitions: and let me exhort you to
9. rest in that Holy Saviour, of whose divinity you are fully assured,
10. tho he was revealed humbly in the flesh. In him, the Author of
11. 12. all heavenly grace, you are compleat. The blessings of his church are conferred upon you, through faith, and repentance. As circumcision was the sign of God's covenant with the Jews; so is baptism with you. By this rite, you are buried, as it were, with
13. Christ; and raised again, in allusion to his resurrection. For under
14. the gospel you are considered as having been dead in sin; but raised to life through Christ; who forgives your sin—supersedes

12. The mode of administring baptism by immersion, as was formerly practised, is here alluded to.

those

thoſe rites, and ceremonies, by which the Jews held their claim to God's peculiar favour—and having vanquiſhed the power of 15.
Satan, hath triumphed openly over him. Pay no attention there- 16.
fore to thoſe, who maintain the neceſſity of Jewiſh obſervances. 17.
The moſaic ceremonies were mere ſhadows, and types of Chriſt.——
Neither be deceived by an affectation of humility in the adoration 18.
of angels; which ariſes from the arrogance of human reaſon, intruding into ſubjects beyond it's reach, without reſting on any authority; and giving up the interceſſion of Chriſt—the only real 19.
interceſſion, through which we are taught to approach the Father. Through him the whole body of chriſtians are united as under one head; and from him they receive all their ſupply of ſpiritual nouriſhment.——If then you are to conſider yourſelves as dead to the 20. 21. 22. 23.

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15. This, in the opinion of many judicious interpreters, refers to the abridged power of the devil, after chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed, agreeably to what our Saviour himſelf ſays, *I ſaw Satan as lightning fall from heaven.* Luke x. 18.

16. The *ſabbaths* here mentioned are not the ſeventh-day ſabbaths; but Jewiſh feſtivals.

18. Making interceſſion through angels, under the pretence of not daring to apply directly to God, was a hereſy (derived in part perhaps from the Platonic philoſophers) which obtained early in the chriſtian churches of Greece. About the third century a canon was made at Laodicea againſt thoſe, who maintained this doctrine, under the name of *Angelici*——It would be ſomewhat ſurprizing after this, that the papiſts ſhould broach anew an old diſcarded error of apoſtolic times, and hold it with ſuch inflexible obſtinacy, if the hiſtory of mankind did not ſhew in numberleſs other inſtances, that tenacity in the minds of men, eſpecially when united in ſociety, with which they perſevere in holding errors, they have once adopted; tho one ſhould ſuppoſe, that in their own minds they cannot but contemn them.

20. Here the apoſtle ſeems to draw his concluſion from what he had ſaid in the 12th, and 13th verſes.

23. In explaining this verſe, I confeſs I have been chiefly led by the ſound of the words; for, I own, I cannot underſtand the ſenſe by the help of any commentator I have ſeen. The beſt interpreter, I think, is Whitby; who produces long quotations from Joſephus, Philo, and other writers, to ſhew that the apoſtle alludes to the opinions, and practices of the Eſſenes. See alſo Dr. Prideaux on this ſubject, part II. b. V. p. 365.

world through Chrift; why, as if living in the world, fhould you ftill be fubject to thefe carnal ordinances, with regard to meats, and other things, which are now entirely abrogated; and depend on the mere authority of man? Why fhould you pay any attention either to thofe other extravagances I have juft mentioned with regard to angel-worfhip? All thefe things, whatever fpecious pretences they may hold out, are certainly both difhonourable to God; and unfatisfactory to man. Through Chrift's refurrection you are raifed to the hope of eternal life. The great conclufion therefore is, that you fhould fet your affections on *heavenly*, not on *earthly* things. In this world you are dead: you muft confider your life as laid up with Chrift, in his bleffed keeping, till the great day fhall reftore it to everlafting happinefs.

CHAP. III. 1. 2. 3. 4.

Under a fenfe then of thefe high expectations, purify all thofe grofs affections, and appetites, which have ever drawn the wrath of God upon mankind; and which you indulged, like other heathen, before your converfion. Diveft your minds alfo of wrath, and malice—your converfation of railing, lewdnefs, and falfehood: always remembering, that you are now to confider your nature as totally changed. All your old habits muft be laid afide; and habits intirely new taken up, after the example of your bleffed Saviour; in whom all diftinctions are now loft, which country, education, or condition of life, makes among men.

5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11.

Confider yourfelves therefore in the light of God's holy fervants; and inftead of thofe worldly lufts, and paffions, which your profeffion forbids, cloath yourfelves with affection to each other; with humility, meeknefs, gentlenefs, and forbearance; forgiving each

12. 13.

3. It is a beautiful image to confider our lives, as treafures, locked up with Chrift in heaven.

other;

other, and remembering the many ſins, which Chriſt hath forgiven you. Let charity, which is the bond of all virtues, as 14.
uniting them together, be the principal badge of your profeſſion. Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, and influence you, as 15.
one body, in performing acts of gratitude and praiſe. Let the 16.
doctrines of the goſpel be the leading principles of your hearts. Let them inſpire your *common intercourſe*, with holy converſation—your *public meetings*, with ſpiritual hymns. Let them regulate 17.
your words, and actions; and make your whole lives one courſe of joy, and thankfulneſs to God through Chriſt.

In the mean time, let not your *private* affections be loſt in *general* 18.
notions of chriſtian charity. Let the wife pay a proper ſubmiſſion to her huſband—and the huſband a due regard to his wife. Let 19.
children obey their parents, as God hath injoined: and let parents 20. 21.
treat their children with that kindneſs, which may ſecure their affection. Let the ſervant obey his maſter, not on mere worldly 22. 23.
principles; but in obedience to God, from whom he muſt expect 24.
the reward of his ſervices. Let him conſider himſelf as the ſervant of Chriſt; who has the ſame regard for him, as for his maſter; 25.
to whom, as well as to his maſter, he is certainly accountable CHAP. IV.
for his wrong behaviour. Let the maſter alſo treat the ſervant
with juſtice, and kindneſs; remembering always that he too has 1.
a Maſter in heaven.

Let me conclude with exhorting you earneſtly to conſtant, and 2.
fervent prayer; never forgetting to add *thankſgiving* to your *peti-* 3. 4.

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22. The ſervants St. Paul here means were ſlaves, many of whom had embraced chriſtianity. Whether thoſe converts had any idea, that a converſion to chriſtianity was a manumiſſion; or whether the apoſtle had compaſſion on their ſtation, he often dwells on topics of advice, and comfort to them.

tions. And in your prayers let me be remembered—that, altho I am now a priſoner for the goſpel, I may ſtill be permitted to open it to mankind, in what manner God thinks beſt.

5. Act prudently in your intercourſe towards thoſe, who profeſs not the goſpel; redeeming the time, which you yourſelves have
6. loſt, when you were unbelievers. Be as diſcrete alſo in your words, as in your actions. Let every thing you ſay, be ſaid in the ſpirit of the goſpel; whether you anſwer your private adverſary; or give your teſtimony in public.

7. 8. 9. With Oneſimus, who is now become a faithful brother, I ſend Tychicus; from whom you may receive every information with regard to me; and through whom I hope to have a pleaſing return of information from you.

10. 11. Ariſtarchus, Mark the nephew of Barnabas, (whom I before recommended to you) and Juſtus, ſend their ſalutations. Of all the Jews now in Rome, theſe three only have been of aſſiſtance to me in the goſpel.

12. 13. 14. Of the Gentile chriſtians, Luke the phyſician, Demas, and Epaphras join in the ſame ſalutation—Epaphras in particular, your worthy miniſter; in whoſe prayers you are always remembered; and whoſe zeal for you, and the churches in your neighbourhood, is unbounded.

15. Salute in our names, all the brethren at Laodicea; particularly
16. Nymphas; and the church in his houſe. Let this epiſtle be read to

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9. This Oneſimus is ſuppoſed to be Philemon's ſlave, whom St. Paul converted. See his epiſtle to Philemon.

14. Demas on ſome worldly account, left the apoſtle. See 2 Tim. iv. 10. But it depends on the dates of this epiſtle, and of the ſecond to Timothy, whether he left the apoſtle, before he is here mentioned, or after.

16. What epiſtle from Laodicea this was, is not known. It was probably ſome epiſtle, which that church wrote to the apoſtle on ſubjects, which he thought might be uſeful among the

to the church of Laodicea; and do you read the epiſtle from thence: 17.
and warn Archippus to pay great attention to the miniſtry he has received.

With my kind remembrance of you all, I ſign this epiſtle with 18.
my own hand. Forget not my ſufferings in the goſpel. The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, be with you all; Amen!

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the Coloſſian chriſtians; and therefore he returned it with his own, to Coloſſe.—Others think that the epiſtle to the Epheſians was a kind of circular epiſtle, of which the church of Laodicea had a copy.

END OF THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

PREFACE.

TO THE

TWO EPISTLES TO THE THESSALONIANS.

THESE two epiſtles are ſuppoſed to have been written from Corinth; and Dr. Lardner imagines they were the firſt, which St. Paul wrote. I think this rather unlikely from the concluſion of the former: *The ſalutation of me Paul with mine own hand; which is the token in every epiſtle.*——But it is a matter of little moment.

In the former of theſe epiſtles, the apoſtle expreſſes himſelf much pleaſed with the behaviour of his new converts. He exhorts them to continue ſteadily in their profeſſion, by dwelling on the oppoſition, and difficulties he had met with in converting them—and on the diſintereſted affection he had always ſhewn them. He warns them againſt thoſe heathen impurities, which they had ſo lately relinquiſhed. He inculcates brotherly love; and ſettles ſome points with regard to the reſurrection; on which ſubject ſeveral erroneous opinions had obtained. Laſtly, he exhorts them to vigilance, and perſeverance; and concludes with general inſtructions.

In the ſecond epiſtle he incourages his converts ſtill further in ſteadineſs, and perſeverance; takes up the argument again with regard to the falſe opinions, which prevailed about the reſurrection; and concludes with adviſing them to give no colour to an objection, commonly made againſt chriſtians, from their being diſpoſed to idleneſs.

FIRST EPISTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

CHAP. I.

PAUL, Silas, and Timothy to the chriſtian church eſtabliſhed at Theſſalonica, grace, and peace through God, and Chriſt!

1. 2. 3. 4. It is not without ſincere thankſgiving to God, that we remember your faith, and charity; your patience, and hope in that holy

5. religion, into which you have been called—a religion, which has not only been preached to you; but proved by the gift of the Holy Ghoſt; and by the miracles, which we were enabled to work among

6. you. Impreſſed by theſe things you embraced it ſteadily; and were able to bear the afflictions it brought upon you, through the inward

7. joys, which it produced: inſomuch, that you became examples to

8. all the faithful in Macedonia, and Achaia: and not there only, but in all other places, your faith is ſpoken of; and that ready zeal

9. acknowledged, with which you received the meſſengers of truth;

10. turning from idols, to embrace the only true God; and expecting the gracious promiſes of the goſpel, on the foundation of Chriſt's reſurrection from the dead.

CHAP. II.

1. 2. What difficulties attended our firſt labours among you, you well know; and how zealouſly we preached the goſpel, notwithſtanding

1. 2. See Acts xvi. 17.

the

the violent oppoſition we met with. You are witneſſes alſo with 3.
what purity, and guileleſs ſincerity we exhorted you, to continue
in the faith. In this great work, which is intruſted to us, we 4.
have acted as men, who are accountable to that God, who knoweth
the heart. We never adapted our doctrine to any indirect views 5.
either of ourſelves, or of others: we ſought neither praiſe, nor 6.
profit. No burden of any kind laid we upon you; but treated you, 7.
on all occaſions, with parental tenderneſs; and were ready, if it 8.
had been the will of God, to have given our lives for your ſake.
You well remember how laborioufly we earned our daily bread 9.
among you, that our preaching might be free from every intereſted
appearance. To you we appeal—to God alſo—how holily, and 10.
juſtly we lived among you; and with what purity of manners: 11.
exhorting you, with a father's gentleneſs, to live in ſteady obedience 12.
to that holy religion, which you had embraced.

Nor were our endeavours fruitleſs. We thank God, that you 13.
received the goſpel, not as a human inſtitution; but as a gift from
heaven; imitating the example of the earlieſt churches in Chriſt; 14.
which were eſtabliſhed in Judea. Like them alſo you were per-
ſecuted by your own brethren. After the Jews had killed their own 15.
prophets, and put to death the Lord Jeſus, *we* had nothing to expect
from them but the extremity of perſecution. And we received it in
full meaſure—partly indeed on your account; for one of the great 16.
cauſes of their malice to us, was our preaching the goſpel to the
Gentiles.——But the meaſure of their iniquity is now full.

In theſe, and all your perſecutions, I would I were able to com- 17.
fort you by my preſence, as well as by my epiſtle. It was my
intention indeed, more than once, to have viſited you: but I have 18.

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18. Satan is often put for an adverſary, or oppoſer. *Get thee behind me, Satan.*

19. 20. been detained here by ill-disposed persons. My affections are always with you: for nothing is to me a matter of such joy, as the hope of presenting you holy before God, in the great day.

CHAP. III. This strong affection impelling me, as I could not myself leave
1. 2. 3. Athens, I sent Timothy to you, to establish your faith; and to encourage you to undergo, with christian fortitude, those persecutions for the cross of Christ, which, you are well informed, we
4. must all prepare ourselves to suffer. So early, as when I was last with you, I assured you of this, and we have now experienced it.
5. I feared lest these trials of your faith might have been too severe for you; and, in my tenderness, I could not forbear sending
6. 7. Timothy to inquire after your situation. His return, with the joyful account of your faith, and charity, and affectionate remembrance of me, hath dispelled all my fears; and given me joy in the
8. midst of my distresses. I feel myself revived by your steadiness;
9. and I give thanks to God for the joyful accounts I have heard of
10. you; praying night, and day, that I may be permitted to see you;
11. 12. and make up every deficiency in your faith. May the Lord God, and our Saviour Christ direct my way unto you! and make you increase more and more in kindness, and love; that you may have
13. holy confidence in that day, when our blessed Lord shall appear in glory!

CHAP. IV. Let me then beseech you, my brethren, and earnestly exhort you, to observe strictly that rule of duty, which you have received. You
1. 2. 3. remember the injunctions we laid upon you against those vices, which are practised in Gentile countries—against fornication in
4. 5. particular. A much purer life will be expected from you, than from the ignorant heathen. You know, that these impurities cannot be

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4. Bowyer conjectures, that σκευος should be written σκηνος, *his tabernacle*—that is, his body.

practised

practiſed without injury to others, as well as yourſelves. You know 6.
alſo, as we have often warned you, that they will draw the judg- 7.
ment of God upon you. God hath called the chriſtian to purity 8.
of life. The impure chriſtian therefore not only deſpiſes the law of man; but the law of God alſo, and the impulſe of his Holy Spirit.

With regard to brotherly love, I need not ſay any thing to you. 9.
Your own hearts inform you, that this duty is impreſſed upon you, by a greater teacher than I am, even by God himſelf. And
indeed I have nothing to charge you with on this head: I ſhall only 10.
exhort you, that in this, and all other chriſtian virtues, you may increaſe more, and more.

I could wiſh you alſo to intermeddle as little as poſſible, with 11. 12.
the affairs of the heathen people, among whom you live. Follow induſtriouſly your own callings; and ſhew your Gentile neighbours, that you mean not to be a uſeleſs burthen upon them.

With regard to your deceaſed brethren, I hope your chriſtian 13.
faith will keep your ſorrow within bounds. If you believe the 14
reſurrection of Chriſt, you cannot doubt of theirs: and whether 15. 16. 17.
we be alive, at that great day; or whether we be dead, it matters 18.
not; when Chriſt ſhall come to judgment, all the faithful ſhall be
united with him. Let this be your conſolation. But at what time CHAP. V.
theſe great events ſhall be brought about, is a matter, which we are 1.
no way concerned to know. One thing we all know, that the day 2.
of

6. The phraſes to go *beyond*, and *defraud* have reference, according to the beſt commentators, to the impurities mentioned before. Impurities of this kind certainly involve others in guilt, as well as ourſelves—*In any matter*, may be better tranſlated, *in this matter*.

11. It was one of the great objections, which the heathen made to chriſtianity, that it was an idle profeſſion. Tertull. apol. cap. 42.

17. I do not pretend to underſtand this very difficult paſſage; and therefore I have given it a general ſignification. Indeed I think it is rather preſuming to endeavour to explain it.

3. of the Lord will come like *a thief in the night*; and find the world
4. in a ſtate of full ſecurity.——God forbid, my brethren, that you
5. 6. ſhould be thus found! You are the children of the day. Preſerve that
7. character. Be vigilant, and attentive. Night is the ſeaſon of ſloth
8. and riot. With theſe things the children of the day are at variance. Be you, like good centinels, always under arms; girt round with the breaſt-plate of faith, and love; and taking the hope of ſalvation
9. for a helmet—that hope, which was purchaſed for us by our
10. Lord Jeſus Chriſt; who died for our ſins, and is the great foundation of our comfort, and happineſs, both in this world, and the next.
11. Let theſe things therefore fortify you in your ſpiritual warfare. Continue to exhort, and ſtrengthen each other.

12. Fail not in a due reſpect to thoſe, who are your ſpiritual guides;
13. and eſteem them for the ſake of their labour.——Be at peace among
14. yourſelves. Rebuke the diſorderly. Encourage the humble. Aſſiſt
15. the weak. Shew forbearance to all. Return not evil for evil; but be kind, and affectionate, not only among yourſelves, but to
16. 17. 18. others. Let holy joy fill your hearts. Let it continually break
19. out in prayers, and praiſes; and thus confirm in yourſelves, more
20. 21. and more, the grace of God.——Attend to preaching; but prove
22. the doctrine by the word of God.——Abſtain from the very appear-

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"*We who are alive*, ſays the apoſtle, *ſhall not prevent them which are aſleep*—and *the dead in Chriſt, ſhall riſe firſt*." Theſe paſſages apparently relate to ſome great event, at the conſummation of all things. And tho we have other hints, in different parts of ſcripture, particularly in the Revelations (xx. 4, 5, 6.) which ſeem relative to the ſame event; yet the whole is ſo obſcure, that I think we ought to be very cautious in our interpretations.

19. *Quench not the Spirit*, Lord Barrington (Miſc. ſac. vol. I. p. 140) ingeniouſly ſuppoſes this expreſſion alludes to the flame of fire, under which appearance the Spirit originally deſcended.

21. It appears from the beginning of the ſecond chapter of the next epiſtle, that falſe teachers had already begun to infuſe their doctrines.

ance

ance of evil: and may the God of peace ſanctify you; ſo that you 23.
may be pure, and holy at the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; in 24.
whoſe gracious promiſes let us continually truſt.——Make us the 25.
conſtant ſubject of your prayers. Salute all the brethren in our 26.
name; and let this epiſtle be read in your aſſembly. 27.
The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you all. Amen! 28.

END OF THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

SECOND EPISTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

CHAP. I.

PAUL, Silas, and Timothy to the chriſtian church at Theſſa- 1. 2.
lonica, grace, mercy, and peace from God, the Father; and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt!

With thankfulneſs to God we hear of the increaſe of your faith, 3.
and charity; and we mention every where that chriſtian ſpirit, with 4.
which you bear perſecution, as an example to all the churches of Chriſt. And herein, my brethren, are the righteous judgments 5.
of God fulfilled. They who perſecute you, ſhall draw a puniſh- 6.
ment on themſelves; and you who are perſecuted, ſhall receive that 7.
reſt from your labours, which the Lord ſhall give you at the laſt great day. He will then puniſh the wicked, and diſobedient as 8. 9.
they deſerve; and will receive his ſaints into manſions of never- 10.

5. *Which is a manifeſt token of the righteous judgment*, &c. That is, we conclude from your innocent ſufferings here, that God muſt be a righteous judge hereafter; and ſet all things to rights.

8. This puniſhment ſeems to include both thoſe, who act contrary to the light of nature, and that of revelation.

ending

11. ending glory. We pray therefore, that your faith may bring you off conquerors in all your trials; and that you may be found worthy
12. of acceptance with God—that the gospel of Christ may be glori-
CHAP. II. fied by you, and you by it, through the grace of God.

1. 2. 3. And now, my brethren, I beseech you not to regard the deceptions of those, who would persuade you, that the day of judgment is at hand. Before that day, the church hath many a fiery
4. trial to pass through: and among other kinds of opposition, prophane, and blasphemous attempts will be made to set up the crea-
5. ture, in the room of the Creator. You may remember, that I
6. told you of these things, when I was with you. They shall not speedily come to pass; but all of them shall be revealed in due
7. time. This opposition to the truth hath already begun to work;
8. and will continue; tho it may be prevented for a time. At length the wicked oppofers of the truth shall be finally beaten down; who
9. 10. with all the arts, and deceptions of Satan, beguiled others; after
11. 12. having first rejected the truth themselves. As they have *pleasure* in wickedness, they will be, for that reason deserted by God; and left a prey to their own delusions.

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11. *The good pleasure of God's goodness* is a strong expression of the divine benevolence.

1. *By the coming*, and *by our gathering*, should be translated, *About the coming*, or *concerning*, &c.

2. *Nor by letter:* as if they had put some false glosses on his former epistle.

4. See this passage, with regard to *the man of sin*, applied to the papal power, by Bp. Newton in his Diss. on Proph.—and by Bp. Hurd in his eleventh sermon on prophecy; and expresly treated by Dr. Benson in his *Dissertation on the man of sin*.—Σεβασμα may apply to any thing held in high reverence.

7. They who interpret these passages of scripture, of the papal power, suppose that the power that *with-holdeth* or *letteth*, is the Roman government. When that should be dissolved, the Roman hierarchy should supply its place. Tertullian, Augustine, and Chrysostom all agree in saying that Anti-Christ should not appear, till after the fall of the Roman empire.

8. *Wicked.* Ανομος, *lawless*. It is remarkable, that the pope in the canon-law is said to be, *Omni lege humanâ solutus.—Nec totus clerus, nec totus mundus potest judicare papam.*——*Consume* (αναλωσει) to *waste by little, and little.*

12. *Damned.* Κριθωσι; *judged.*

For

For you, my brethren, in the mean time, we give thanks to 13.
God. From the firſt of our publication of the goſpel to you, you
liſtened to the truth; and fully believing it, were ſanctified through
the Spirit. By us you have been called to ſalvation: let us then 14. 15.
exhort you to ſtand faſt in all the doctrines you have received: and
may the merciful, and gracious God, and Jeſus Chriſt, on whom 16.
all our hopes depend, comfort, and eſtabliſh you in all goodneſs. 17.

CHAP. III.

Finally, my brethren, pray for us, that the word of God may
have as free a courſe among the Gentiles here, as it hath had among
you: and that God would, in his good time, deliver us from the 1. 2.
perſecutions of ſuch as oppoſe the truth. He is the only founda- 3.
tion of truſt. In him we have confidence, that you will live up 4.
to the religion you have received. May your hearts be filled with 5.
the love of God, and the patient expectation of the coming of
Chriſt!

And now, my brethren, let me, with apoſtolic authority, in- 6.
join you to withdraw yourſelves from every perſon of your ſociety,
who behaves ſo as to ſcandalize his profeſſion. In *our* behaviour 7.
I am perſuaded you will find nothing, which we may not propoſe
as an example. Remember how we laboured, each in his pro- 8.
feſſion, that we might not be chargeable to others; not claiming 9.
any exemption as miniſters of the goſpel, which we might have
done; but rather chooſing to make ourſelves an example; inſtruct-
ing each of you, that *he who will not work, hath no right to eat.* 10. 11.
And we are ſorry to hear, there are any among you, who by trou-
bling themſelves more with other people's affairs, than their own,
need this reproof.——For the future, we command them, on the 12.

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15. In the original, the word παραδοσεις, or *traditions*, is uſed; but the papiſt will remember, that by *traditions* nothing is here meant, but *inſtruction immediately from the mouth of an apoſtle.*

8. See a note on 1 Theſſ. iv. 12.

13. authority of Chriſt, to work quietly for their own maintenance:
14. and do you ſet them a proper example. If they ſtill continue refractory, bring them to ſhame by ſeparating them from your
15. aſſemblies; ſtill however obſerving the end of reproof, which is only to reclaim.

16. 17. May the God of peace fill you with all peace! The Lord be with you! I write this ſalutation with my own hand; as my uſual ſignature in all my epiſtles.

18. The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you all; Amen!

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17. This *token in every epiſtle* might be a mean to prevent impoſition, as many falſe epiſtles were probably written in the apoſtle's name.

END OF THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

PREFACE

TO THE

TWO EPISTLES TO TIMOTHY.

IN the firſt of theſe epiſtles the apoſtle, having reminded Timothy of the early charge, that had been committed to him in preaching the goſpel, gives him particular inſtructions—with regard to public devotions, and aſſemblies—with regard to the behaviour of women—and of paſtors; to whom he recommends a proper mode of oppoſing errors. He then inſtructs him with regard to the government of the church; and concludes with an exhortation to particular duties.

He begins the ſecond epiſtle with paſtoral exhortations; and preſſes the neceſſity of avoiding trifling diſputes, which draw men aſide from the great points of religion: concluding with an account of the adverſaries, which he himſelf had met with.

Both theſe epiſtles were written to one of the firſt chriſtian biſhops; and contain the great outlines, both of the epiſcopal office, and of that of all the other miniſters of the church of Chriſt.

FIRST EPISTLE

OF

ST. PAUL TO TIMOTHY.

CHAP. I.

1. PAUL, an apoſtle by the immediate appointment of God,
2. unto Timothy my ſon in the faith; grace, mercy, and peace, through our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt!

3. When I went into Macedonia, I left you at Epheſus to have
4. an eye on certain teachers, whoſe diſcourſes to the people were made up of ſuch trifling matter, as adminiſtered nice queſtions,
5. rather than real improvement. I deſired you to preſs home on all your converts, that the great end of religion is charity; proceeding from an honeſt heart, a good conſcience, and a ſincere
6. 7. faith: which doctrine, eaſy as it is, hath been perverted by many, who ſet up to teach, what they do not underſtand.

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4. St. Paul, in this verſe, and afterwards, ſpeaks particularly againſt that attention, which the Jews paid to genealogies. It was carried among them to a very great height. Jerome, ſomewhere ſpeaking on this ſubject, ſays, *They were as well acquainted with genealogies from Adam to Zerubbabel, as with their own names.* This attention to genealogies was at firſt neceſſary in aſcertaining the deſcent of Chriſt; and the completion of the prophecies. It then tended only to draw the mind from more uſeful purſuits.—Afterwards the Jewiſh converts were ſtudious to claim kindred with Chriſt. To this alſo the apoſtle might perhaps allude.

Nor

Nor do they repreſent us fairly. We by no means deſpiſe the 8.
law. We conſider the ceremonial part of it as an introduction to
chriſtianity: and the moral law—not indeed as able to juſtify man- 9. 10.
kind—but as the means of reſtraining wickedneſs. This, you 11.
know, hath ever been the tenor of that doctrine, which I have
taught, through the mercy of God, who hath enabled me to teach 12.
it; tho I was formerly one of it's greateſt perſecutors. But God 13.
had mercy on my ignorance; and ſhed his grace upon me; making 14. 15.
me an example of that great truth, that Jeſus Chriſt came into
the world to ſave ſinners; and holding me out as a wonderful in- 16.
ſtance of his mercy, through Chriſt—a ſubject, on which the praiſe 17.
and gratitude of ſinners can never be exhauſted.

Let me intreat you then again to preſs home the true doctrines 18.
of chriſtianity as an able miniſter, under the appointment of the
Holy Spirit of God. Let it be your conſtant doctrine, that faith, 19.
and a good life muſt go hand in hand; and that where the latter
is wanting, the former can never exiſt. Among theſe defective 20.
chriſtians may be numbered Hymeneus, and Alexander; whom
I have treated with ſuch ſeverity, as, I hope, will lead them to
repentance. CHAP. II.

But to be more particular in my directions to you; I exhort 1.
you, firſt, in your religious aſſemblies, to pray for all mankind; 2.
and among them for the princes, under whoſe government you
live, that you may be allowed the profeſſion of your religion. This 3.
is agreeable to the ſpirit of that goſpel, which is extended to *all*

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18. The word παραγγελια, I think, ſhews, that this verſe has reference to the 3d, and 5th verſes of this chapter, in which the ſame word is uſed.

1. I ſhould ſuppoſe the words δεησεις, προσευχας, and εντευξεις are not ſynonimous; tho it may be difficult to affix a proper meaning to each. The firſt perhaps ſignifies *prayer in our neceſſities*—the ſecond, *the deprecation of evil*—and the third, *intercеſſion for others*.

mankind.

4. 5. *mankind.* For, as there is one God; ſo there is one mediator,
6. 7. who laid down his life for *all.* And it is indeed to the Gentile part of the world, however oppoſite this doctrine may be to Jewiſh
8. prejudices, that I am appointed an apoſtle. It is not therefore only in a Jewiſh temple, or ſynagogue, where the prayers of the righteous are heard; I injoin chriſtians to hold their public aſſemblies in all places; and to pray for all mankind, without animoſity, and prejudice.

9. 10. Exhort alſo your female converts to modeſty of apparel; to cloath
11. 12. 13. 14. themſelves with chriſtian virtues, inſtead of coſtly attire: and let them not preach in your aſſemblies; nor do any thing contrary
15. to the original ſubjection, which they owe to man. I mean not however to encourage any uſeleſs auſterities. A ſtate of marriage
CHAP. III. is very conſiſtent with a ſtate of ſalvation: all I require from them in that ſtate is, the faith, and charity, and purity of chriſtians.

1. With regard to the government of the church, the office of a
2. biſhop muſt be conſidered as a very arduous employment. A biſhop muſt

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5. This verſe, *There is one God, and one mediator between God, and man, the man Chriſt Jeſus,* Dr. Prieſtly quotes as an argument againſt the divinity of Chriſt. He quotes it *without* the context: *with* it, it has a different air. *God our Saviour will have all men to be ſaved; and come to the knowledge of the truth: for* (ver. 5) *he is equally the God of all; and Chriſt is equally the Saviour of all.*

11. On laying the various texts together, in relation to a woman's teaching in public, (ſee a note on 1 Cor. xiv. 34) I am inclined to eſtabliſh this diſtinction. If the woman were immediately inſpired, as many were in thoſe days, *ſhe might preach*; if not, ſhe was to *learn in ſilence with all ſubjection.* Whereas the man was allowed to preach, whether he were immediately inſpired, or not.

15. There are many interpretations of this text. What I have given, appears to me the moſt natural, and eaſy—eſpecially, as it is very probable from other paſſages of St. Paul (ſee the ivth and vth chapters of this epiſtle, and Heb. xiii. 4) that a ſtate of celibacy was then beginning to be thought purer, than a ſtate of marriage.

2. *The huſband of one wife.* It does not appear, that if a polygamiſt embraced chriſtianity, he was ordered to put away all his wives except one; but the apoſtle here fixes an indelible ſtigma

muſt be a man of unexceptionable character—no polygamiſt before his converſion—active—ſerious—regular—ready to receive the ignorant, and deſirous to inſtruct them—temperate—gentle—mode- 3.
rate; and free from the leaſt taint of covetouſneſs. Let him firſt 4. 5.
ſhew, by the regularity, and decency of his own family, how well able he is to govern the church of God. Nor would I have 6.
a new-convert appointed to this office; leſt he may not yet have acquired that ſteadineſs, and humility, which are neceſſary to diſcharge it: but let him have the moſt ample teſtimony in his fa- 7.
vour from the Jews, or heathen he hath left; leſt any aſperſion on his paſt life ſhould prevent the effects of his miniſtry.

Let the deacon alſo be a man of modeſty, and ſimplicity; tem- 8.
perate, and moderate; uniting pure manners with ſincere faith. 9.
Till he have approved himſelf ſuch let him not be admitted. The 10.
polygamiſt I ſet aſide; but conſider it as a great recommendation 11. 12. 13.
to the church, if a man have carefully inſtructed, and governed his own family. Thus living, the deacon ſhews himſelf worthy of a higher office.——Let the deaconneſſes alſo be women of unexceptionable characters. Buſy, talking, indiſcrete women are very

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ſtigma on the practice of polygamy, by excluding from the miniſtry all, who had practiſed it, before their converſion.—The Greek church takes this text in ſo odd a way, that it is held *abſolutely requiſite* in a biſhop *to be the huſband of one wife*; and what is ſtill more ſingular, when the wife dies, the epiſcopal office of the huſband ceaſes. At leaſt that uſed to be the practice. See Perry's account of Ruſſia, p. 230.

11. The word γυναικας in our tranſlation is rendered *wives*; but as the apoſtle is ſpeaking of the miniſters of the church, and as we know, there was formerly an order of women called *deaconneſſes*, who aſſiſted at the baptiſm of female converts, and were employed in attending the ſick, and in other offices of charity, it is moſt likely, that theſe are the perſons meant.—The old interpreters of ſcripture gave this ſenſe to the paſſage. Περι των το αξιωμα της διακονιας εχοντων λεγει. Chryſ. in locum.—I have taken a little liberty in tranſpoſing the words, as it makes the ſenſe rather eaſier; but it is not at all neceſſary to the interpretation I have given.

13. *Great boldneſs.* A good conſcience, and faithful diſcharge of a man's duty, give him a confidence in his work, which nothing elſe can give him.

improper

14. 15. improper to be employed.——I intend ſoon to ſee you; but leſt I ſhould be prevented, I tranſmit theſe inſtructions; that, in the
16. mean time, the church may ſuffer no detriment.—Great, no doubt, is the work, in which we are engaged. The redemption of man, is a ſcheme, adored by angels—proved on earth by prophecies, and miracles—and a foundation laid for its everlaſting continuance, after the aſcenſion of it's bleſſed Author into heaven.

CHAP. IV.

1. 2. But tho chriſtianity thus depends on the ſtrongeſt evidence, we are aſſured by the Spirit of prophecy, that many, miſled by falſe principles, and corrupt practices, ſhall apoſtatize from the truth—
3. 4. 5. that they ſhall engage men in unneceſſary reſtraints; and fill their minds with trifling, and abſurd exceptions; which are contrary to the purity of religion, and the benignity of God. Oppoſe
6. 7. 8. theſe corruptions with ſteadineſs. Oppoſe them by a holy example. Teach your converts, that outward obſervances are of no avail: but that a pious life produces happineſs both here, and
9. hereafter. This is true religion; and it is in a great meaſure
10. for holding this doctrine—faith in Chriſt, and good works, in oppoſition to outward obſervances, that I have ſuffered ſo much perſecution.

11. Be you therefore a faithful follower of my ſteps; and let your
12. gravity, and piety, diſcountenance thoſe, who can object only to
13. your youth. Exhort your converts publicly, and privately; con-
14. ſcientiouſly diſcharging that truſt which the Holy Spirit, and the impoſition of the hands of the preſbytery have laid upon you.
15. 16. Theſe two great points keep ever in view—your life, and your doctrine. Make them the only objects of your attention. They

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16. *God manifeſt in the fleſh*, is an expreſſion, which is capable, I think, only of one ſenſe.

10. In the text it is, *Who is the Saviour of all men, ſpecially of thoſe, that believe*; which words can only mean, that he is univerſally the Saviour of all mankind, who believe.

are

are the great means of your own ſalvation; and of the ſalvation of others.

CHAP. V.

With becoming modeſty rebuke the old—the young with the tenderneſs of a brother—the female penitent with cautious gravity.— Let the church ſeek out deſtitute widows; and remind the children, and near relations of widows in general, to maintain the indigent of their own families, when they are able. He who neglects this duty, neglects even what the heathen practiſes. The widow, who is taken into the ſervice of the church, muſt long have been dead to the world: ſhe muſt be remarkable for her piety; for her domeſtic virtues; and her works of charity. Till ſhe be threeſcore years of age, I would not have her eligible. Nor would I have thoſe choſen, who have engaged lightly in ſecond marriages. Young widows, tho devoted to the church, may, to the great ſcandal of it, engage in heathen alliances, as ſome have done. At leaſt, there is often a levity in them, which is not agreeable to ſo ſacred a dedication. Let them therefore, if they chuſe it, engage again in the married ſtate; and ſhew a laudable example in the education of their families. By no means however let them be burthenſome to the church, if their relations can maintain them. The church hath real objects enough to provide for.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16.

The pious paſtor well deſerves his maintenance, on the principles both of the law, and the goſpel.—Hear no accuſation againſt a preſbyter,

17. 18. 19.

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10. *If ſhe have waſhed the ſaints feet*, means only in the Jewiſh idiom, *if ſhe hath entertained them kindly*; or *done good offices to them*.

17. This expreſſion, in the original, *Let the elders, that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour*, applies more happily to the caſe of the pluraliſt, than any other in the Teſtament. It admits ſo eaſy a verſion "Let the pious paſtor have two livings." I mean not however to enter into any argument on this queſtion: all I mean to ſay, in commenting on this text, is, that I think it nothing to the purpoſe.—It ſeems very plain indeed from the *context*, that τιμη ſignifies more than an *empty honour*—an *emolument* certainly of ſome kind. But as the

apoſtles,

20. a preſbyter, unleſs ſupported by two, or three witneſſes. But if he be proved guilty, let him be publicly rebuked, as an example to
21. others. With all earneſtneſs, and in the name of God, and Chriſt, I charge you to perform the duties of your function, without pre-
22. judice, and partiality. Fill the offices of the church with great caution. Few conſider ſufficiently the danger of partaking in other
23. mens ſins. Your own example will always be pure—indeed, as far as your health is concerned, I have thought you too abſtemious.
24. 25. The neceſſity of caution in filling the offices of the church, ariſes from the great deceit, and plauſibility of mankind. The characters
CHAP. VI. of few men are ſo conſpicuous, as not to require a very nice examination.

1. 2. The chriſtian religion introduces no change in the civil rights of mankind. Let the ſervant therefore be taught obedience to his
3. 4. 5. maſter, whether he be a heathen, or a chriſtian. He who carries his ideas of goſpel-liberty beyond this, involves his hearers in queſ-
6. tions, debate, and animoſity. It is not the *ſtation of life*, which is the *ſource of happineſs* to the religious breaſt. True piety wants
7. no ſuccours from the world. The enjoyments of life accompany
8. us only to the cloſe of it. What then need we more than food
9. 10. and raiment? A thirſt after worldly enjoyments is wholly incompatible with the virtues of a chriſtian; and all who are miſled by worldly things, will find miſchief, and ruin in the end.

11. Let your diſintereſted behaviour then ſet an example of chriſtian
12. virtues to a ſelfiſh world. Go on manfully to combat the enemies
13. 14. of that faith, under the banners of which you ſerve: and before

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apoſtles, and early chriſtians ſeem not to have had the leaſt idea of expence beyond the neceſſaries of life; it is not to be ſuppoſed, that the emolument here mentioned, could extend further. All good paſtors deſerved a maintenance. None wanted, or wiſhed for more. To be counted *worthy of double maintenance*, I ſhould think, therefore means only to ſhew, how very well they deſerved a maintenance at all: they were doubly worthy of it.

God,

God, and Chriſt, I beſeech you to maintain uncorrupt, the doctrines you have received; waiting with ſilent hope, the fulfilling 15. 16.
of thoſe promiſes, which no mortal can conceive. Inſtruct the 17.
rich not to depend on the good things they enjoy; but on God, the giver of them. Inſtruct them to grow rich in good works— 18.
in *giving*, rather than in *hoarding*. Inſtruct them to lay up for 19.
themſelves a *treaſure*, that will *laſt for ever*.

I conclude, as I began, with exhorting you to preſerve faith- 20.
fully the doctrines, that have been committed to you; and to avoid all trifling, difficult, and unneceſſary queſtions. Curious inquirers 21.
have often carried on their reſearches, till they have loſt themſelves in infidelity.——The grace of God be with you. Amen.

END OF THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

SECOND EPISTLE

OF

St. PAUL to TIMOTHY.

CHAP. I.

PAUL, by the immediate direction of God, appointed an apoſtle, and preacher of that goſpel, which proclaims eternal 1. 2.
life—to my beloved Timothy, grace, mercy, and peace!

The remembrance of our laſt affectionate parting makes me de- 3. 4. 5.
ſirous of ſeeing you again. But however that be, it is a great
happineſs, that I can thank God with ſincerity for that unſhaken
faith, which you have hitherto maintained; and which hath, in
a manner, deſcended to you by inheritance. Again therefore I 6.
write, to excite in you, more and more, a holy zeal in the diſ-
charge of that office, which hath been conferred upon you. Fear 7.
not the oppoſition of men; but truſt in the power of God. Conſider
the evidences of religion; and ſubmit with me to bear affliction 8.
for the ſake of that goſpel, unto which the free grace of God 9. 10.

9. *Who hath called us—according to his own purpoſe, and grace.* No doubt the goſpel was given by the *free grace of God*; that is, mankind were totally undeſerving of it. But this doctrine is ſurely much perverted, when it is drawn to ſay, that as the goſpel, or the ſalvation it brings, is the free gift of God, it is therefore given arbitrarily to one, and denied to another. The heathen, we doubt not, who lives up to the light God hath given him, receives the benefit of the atonement of Chriſt.

hath

hath called us—that gospel, which having been originally planned before the world began, hath now in Christ abolished death; and
11. opened the fountains of life, and immortality.——This is the gospel, which I am appointed to preach to the Gentiles; and for which
12. also I suffer persecution, trusting in those faithful promises, which
13. cannot deceive. Unite with me therefore in the courageous maintenance of this faith—in the uniform practice of the duties, which
14. it injoins—and in the conscientious discharge of that function, in which it hath engaged you.

15. I find myself deserted by all the Asiatic christians; among
16. 17. 18. whom are Phygellus, and Hermogenes. In the midst of this desertion, neither shame, nor any other worldly principle, hath prevented Onesiphorus from ministering to me at Rome, as he had done
CHAP. II. before at Ephesus. May God reward his pious labours, and may you imitate his fortitude! May the grace of God strengthen you in
1. 2. all things; and enable you to instruct those, who may instruct others!

3. 4. Your station is that of a soldier of Christ. You have the difficulties of your profession before you; and if you wish to please your Superior, you must withdraw your mind from every thing
5. but your duty. In the heathen games, an eager contest, regulated
6. by the laws of the course, precedes the crown. The husbandman
7. labours, before he tastes his crop. I need not point out the appli-
8. cation of these allusions to the christian minister. Remember always
9. 10. your suffering Saviour. His death preceded his ascension. How

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12. *To keep that which I have committed*—that is, my soul.

16. *He was not ashamed of my chain.* The apostle speaks of that chain, which he wore as a prisoner at large, according to the Roman custom. See a note on Acts xxviii. 16.

10. The word εκλεκτος, or *elect*, has evidently no relation to the election, or reprobation of individuals; but relates plainly to the Gentiles, as *elected*, or *called by God*, into a partnership, with the Jews in all the benefits of the gospel.

can

can I repine at my own ſufferings, and impriſonment, when I
conſider them as the gracious means, in the hands of God, of
drawing the Gentiles to ſalvation? It is the great comfort of our 11. 12. 13.
holy religion, that if we die unto ſin, we ſhall live with Chriſt;
and if we ſuffer for him, we ſhall be exalted alſo with him. On
the other hand, if we renounce our profeſſion, we may bring ruin
on ourſelves; but we cannot alter the promiſes, and threatnings of
God.

Preſs theſe doctrines therefore earneſtly on your converts. Charge 14. 15.
them to lay aſide their frivolous diſputes; and like a Jewiſh prieſt,
preſiding at a ſacrifice, teach them to ſever the nobler parts from
the ignoble. An attention to theſe frivolous things leads to impiety. 16.
Hence ſprang the hereſy of Hymeneus, and Philetus; who now 17. 18.
deny the reſurrection; and have drawn a party after them, tho 19.
nothing can be plainer, nor ſtand firmer, than our hopes in this
great article. We have God's promiſe; if on our part, we lead
holy lives.——But we are not to wonder at this defection. As in a 20.
great houſe there are variety of utenſils, ſome of an elegant, and
others of a courſer conſtruction; ſo in the church of Chriſt, there
will ever be a difference among it's members: but our buſineſs is 21.
to endeavour to make ourſelves ſuch veſſels, as are *appropriated to the maſter's uſe*; in which no dregs are contained; but liquors of the
pureſt kind.

I cannot therefore preſs you too earneſtly to avoid theſe novel 22.
doctrines. A ſound faith, and good life, are all that a chriſtian
has to concern himſelf about. I have juſt informed you, that theſe 23. 24. 25. 26.
frivolous

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15. The expreſſion in the original, *rightly dividing the word of truth*, is thought to allude, as I have here rendered it, to the prieſt's office in ſacrificing.

22. The words νεωτερικας επιθυμιας, ſeem to be more literally tranſlated, as we have them, *youthful luſts*; but I rather prefer the ſenſe here given, which ſome critics have approved. The

frivolous queſtions lead to impiety. I may add alſo, that they produce animoſity: and how unbecoming, a contentious temper is in a miniſter of Chriſt, I need not tell you. Gentleneſs, and patience ſhould be characteriſtic in him. By theſe he endeavours to draw the ſtraying chriſtian from vice, and error; and lead him to the acknowledgment, and practice of the truth†. Corruption, in a degree, is inſeparable from the pureſt church—wickedneſs will prevail—and the form of religion, inſtead of the ſpirit of it, will poſſeſs the minds of men. They will not be ſatisfied with living in error themſelves, unleſs they lead others after them; and boldly oppoſe the truth. While God permits it, this conteſt between truth, and error muſt ſubſiſt; and increaſe. Be not however diſcouraged. Perſevere in the duties of a chriſtian; and remember, that perſecution, and religion are ever nearly allied.

CHAP. III.
1. 2. 3. 4.
5.
6. 7. 8.
9. 10. 11. 12. 13.

The verb, καινοποιέω, properly ſignifies to *innovate*. I ſee not therefore why the adjective may not ſignify *new*. And as to the word ἐπιθυμία, it is taken in ſo many different ſenſes in the New Teſtament, that if we argue either from it's *uſe*, or *derivation*, we may apply it to any thing, on which the *mind is bent*. St. Peter uſes it entirely in this ſenſe. 1 Peter i. 12.—If then the *terms allow* this interpretation, the *context* ſeems to *require* it. The whole tenor of the chapter oppoſes rather erroneous doctrines, than impure practices.—Beſides, a caution againſt *youthful luſts*, one ſhould ſuppoſe, unneceſſary to a perſon, whom the apoſtle himſelf (1 Tim. v. 23.) blames rather for abſtemiouſneſs; tho in the midſt of the refinements of philoſophy, it is poſſible he might have been in ſome danger of being led aſide by *new fancies* in religion, in oppoſition to thoſe genuine doctrines of chriſtianity, which are touched in the beginning of this chapter.

† I am obliged, in order to preſerve the harmony of compoſition, to give this paſſage in the ſame modernized form, as the other parts of the epiſtle: but no language can reach the pleaſing ſimplicity of the original. There is a mildneſs in the expreſſion, which indicates the thing. "The ſervant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive; but be gentle unto all men; apt to "teach; patient; in meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves; if God peradven-"ture will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth."

8. Jannes, and Jambres are inſtanced among thoſe, who oppoſed the truth. It is remarkable, that Jannes is mentioned with Moſes, in Pliny's natural hiſtory, as an eminent magician. See his index.

Your

Your education hath been ſuperior to that of the generality of men. 14.
Study thoſe ſcriptures therefore, which from a child you have reve- 15.
renced. They will throw the beſt light on the diſpenſation of 16. 17.
the goſpel; and, beſides the inſtructive leſſons they contain, will
furniſh the chriſtian teacher with every needful aſſiſtance.

Exerciſe then, I earneſtly charge you before God, all the functions CHAP. IV.
of your miniſtry. Preach, rebuke, exhort: but do every thing
with humility, and gentleneſs. You and all your ſucceſſors, ſhall 1. 2. 3. 4.
be called on for the exertion of every conciliating virtue. A general
corruption ſhall overſpread both teachers, and hearers. All this 5.
the miniſter of Chriſt muſt bear. He muſt learn to ſuffer: but he
muſt alſo oppoſe falſhood, and ſteadily maintain the truth.

For myſelf, I expect ſhortly to give my laſt great teſtimony to 6.
the truth of the goſpel. My labours are almoſt over; and I have 7. 8.
only to hope, with my fellow-labourers, for the gracious acceptance
of my great Maſter.

I could wiſh you to be here with me, as ſoon as you can. Moſt 9. 10. 11. 12
of my aſſiſtants in the goſpel I have ſent on ſeveral charges. Demas,
preferring the world to the goſpel, hath deſerted me. Luke alone
is with me. I ſhall want the aſſiſtance of Mark: bring him with
you; and remember the papers, and other things which I left 13.

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6. There is great elegance, and force in the original word, Σπενδομαι; *my blood is about to be poured out like a libation.* But I have omitted the metaphor, as it is too bold for a leſs animated phraſeology than the original.

10. Some who date the epiſtle to the Coloſſians after this to Timothy, do not ſuppoſe, that Demas had apoſtatized; but had only behaved, in ſome reſpects improperly: for in Coloſſ. iv. 14, he is mentioned reſpectfully among Paul's friends. The caſe of Demas depends intirely on the dates of the two epiſtles.

13. Among different conjectures about the *cloke* mentioned here, ſome have ſuppoſed it a *cloke-bag*; others have ſuppoſed it the apoſtle's Jewiſh dreſs, which he ſhould ſoon want; leaving his Roman dreſs, till he came into thoſe parts again.

14. 15 16. at Troas. I have been indeed both oppoſed, and deſerted by many during my impriſonment. God will deal with the adverſaries of our faith according to his own good pleaſure. May their oppo-
17. 18. ſition never appear againſt them! A gracious God however has ſupported me, and will ſupport me, under all my ſufferings; which will give efficacy, I doubt not, to my preaching among the Gentiles.

19. 20. 21. All the brethren here deſire their ſalutations. Eraſtus is ſtill at Corinth. Trophimus I have left ſick at Miletum.

I ſhall depend on ſeeing you here before winter.

22. The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, be with you! Amen!

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14. The only perſon mentioned here by name, who made oppoſition to the apoſtle, is one *Alexander, a copper-ſmith*; probably the ſame perſon who is ſpoken of in the firſt chapter of the firſt epiſtle. As Timothy, who was Biſhop of Epheſus, is cautioned againſt him, it is probable, that Alexander was an Epheſian, ſojourning among other ſtrangers at Rome; where he took an opportunity to oppoſe the apoſtle's preaching. St. Paul ſays, he had *greatly withſtood his words*: but there is no reaſon to ſuppoſe any argumentative oppoſition. Alexander the copper-ſmith was probably connected with his countryman Demetrius the ſilverſmith; and oppoſed the goſpel, juſt as that artiſan had done—not by argument; but by tumult. St. Paul's expreſſion to Timothy leads to this ſenſe. Ον και συ φυλασσε; *obſerve him*—have *a prudent eye upon him*—as he was probably a popular, as well as an ill-diſpoſed perſon. It is probable alſo that this is the ſame perſon, who is mentioned as a leader of the infidel Jews at Epheſus. See Acts xix. 33.

14. *The Lord reward him*, &c. as we have it in our tranſlation. The proper tenſe of the word *reward* here, in the original, deſerves as much to be inveſtigated, as any word in the New Teſtament. Αποδωη is the reading our tranſlators have taken; which plainly puts an unchriſtian curſe into the apoſtle's mouth. But if they had lived in later days, when collating MSS. was more in uſe, they would no doubt have taken the future tenſe, αποδωσει, *the Lord will reward him*; which they might have found in ſome of the beſt, and moſt authentic MSS. That the apoſtle did not mean a *curſe*, is evident from the 17th verſe, in which he prays, that it may be averted.

17. *Out of the mouth of the lion*, is ſuppoſed to refer to Nero; before whom in perſon, it is imagined, the apoſtle was brought. See a note on Philip. ii. 27.

END OF THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

PREFACE

OF THE

EPISTLE TO TITUS.

TITUS was preſident, or biſhop of the church eſtabliſhed in Crete; the inhabitants of which iſland were very licentious both in their principles, and practice. In the former they were chiefly corrupted by the Jewiſh zealots, who were ſettled amongſt them. Againſt the tenets introduced by theſe people, many of the precepts of this epiſtle are pointed; particularly thoſe relating to ſervants, and governors; as the judaizing chriſtians ſeem ſcarcely to have allowed the authority of any governor, but God.——The other part of the epiſtle, with regard to the miniſterial office, is nearly the ſame, with the inſtruction given on that head, in the foregoing epiſtles, to Timothy.

EPISTLE

TO

TITUS.

CHAP. I.

1. 2. PAUL, an apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt; and preacher of that goſ-
3. pel, which promiſes eternal life; and which, tho now firſt
4. opened, was deſigned before the world began—to Titus, my be-
loved convert, grace, mercy and peace!

5. The principal purpoſe, for which I leſt you in Crete, was to
regulate, and carry on there, the great work of converſion, which
I had begun; and to ordain miniſters in the ſeveral towns.—I re-
6. 7. 8. 9. peat the inſtructions, I gave you on this head. The miniſter of
the goſpel muſt be a perſon of blameleſs life. I object to any one,
who has been a polygamiſt: but would have an orderly family
eſteemed a recommendation. He muſt conſider himſelf in the
light of God's ſteward. He muſt be gentle; temperate; untainted
by avarice; devoted to God; charitable to man; and above all
things, well eſtabliſhed in the truth of religion, that he may be
prepared, as opportunity offers, either to inſtruct, or reprove.

Great

Great occaſion has a miniſter of Crete in particular to exert all his prudence, and knowledge: for the people are falſe, and licentious, both in principle, and practice; and characterized as ſuch, even by their own writers. Nor are they, in a ſmall degree, corrupted by the infuſion of Jewiſh prejudices. 10. 11. 12.

Treat them therefore with plainneſs. Point out to them the inefficacy of Jewiſh traditions. Shew them how inconſiſtent they are with the intention of the goſpel. Inform them, that purity does not conſiſt in abſtaining from particular meats; but in an unpolluted mind: and preſs upon them, that all who make profeſſion of chriſtianity, be they Jews, or Gentiles, without obſerving it's moral precepts, are abominable in the ſight of God. 13. 14. 15. 16.

CHAP. II.

Theſe ſound doctrines inculcate ſteadily, but with proper diſtinctions, on all ranks of people; holding up, in your own life, a pattern of virtuous behaviour. This will grace your doctrine; and tend more than any thing, to ſilence, and reconcile oppoſition.——Remember eſpecially to inſtruct ſervants to obey their maſters; informing them, that piety in their humble ſtation is one of the greateſt ornaments of the goſpel of Chriſt. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

Thus, like a good paſtor, lay before your converts the great end, and intention of chriſtianity—that it is a ſyſtem of religion inſtructing us in the conſcientious diſcharge of our duty to God, our neighbour, and ourſelves: and in the belief, and hope of that happineſs, which we ſhall receive hereafter, through the death of Chriſt; if we anſwer the end of this holy inſtitution by purifying ourſelves from the corruptions of the world. Let theſe doctrines then be the chief ſubject of your exhortations; and rebuke with that authority, which over-awes contempt. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15.

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12. St. Paul quotes this verſe from Epimenides. The meaning it conveys is, that the *Cretans were a falſe people; and united in their character, the ferocity of the wild beaſt, and the luxury of the domeſticated one.* As to their *falſhood*; κρητιζειν was a proverbial expreſſion for *lying*.

Preach

1. 2. Preach ſubjection to magiſtrates—a readineſs to do good—an averſion to do injury. Point out the propriety of gentleneſs, and
3. 4. 5. 6. 7. forbearance on all occaſions; conſidering the wickedneſs and follies, in which we ourſelves were immerſed, before the goodneſs of God in Chriſt, redeemed us from ſin; and made us heirs of ſalvation,
8. through his grace, not our own deſerts. It is in vain, tell your con-
9. verts, to talk of faith, without good works. On theſe inſiſt, and not on frivolous queſtions, which produce only debate.

10. 11. Notwithſtanding however the gentleneſs, and forbearance, which are due on all occaſions, ſome church-diſcipline may be neceſſary; and he, who continues obſtinate in his wickedneſs, after a ſecond admonition, muſt be ſevered from your communion. I mean not however this ſeverity againſt mere opinions: I ſhould exerciſe it only towards ſuch, as were ſelf-convicted by the wickedneſs of their own actions.

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9. See a note on 1 Tim. i. 4.

11. I have given what appears to be the apoſtle's meaning. To the idea of hereſy he affixes a *bad heart*, as well as an *erroneous opinion*. *A man that is an heretic*, ſays he, *reject*—that is, ſuch an heretic as *is ſubverted, and ſinneth, being condemned of himſelf.*

The ſame reſtriction, which the apoſtle lays on church-diſcipline, ſhould by parity of reaſon act as a reſtriction alſo on the diſturbers of the peace of the chuch by controverſy. Every man has a right to his own opinion, and to the enjoyment of it: but no man has a right to publiſh it in fundamentals, to the offence of others, againſt opinions long eſtabliſhed; unleſs thoſe opinions *come under the apoſtle's idea of hereſy*.—It may be ſaid, the truth can never be injured by debate; and freedom of debate is the proteſtant's charter.—It is true: the truth can never be injured by debate; if the debate reached thoſe only, who are capable of debating. Others, a controverſy may miſlead.—And as to the proteſtant's charter, it were well, if the example of the early proteſtants had more weight. It was the ſcandalous ſale of indulgences for ſin, which firſt opened their mouths. Tranſubſtantiation, and other opinions, tho in themſelves abſurd, as they were not openly marked with *the apoſtle's characteriſtics of hereſy*, were at firſt treated with ſome reſpect: till by degrees, *ſo many* things were found to be *wicked*, that other things began to be *ſuſpected*; and a *total change* enſued.

I ſhall

I ſhall ſoon ſend either Artimas, or Tychicus to you. On his 12.
arrival meet me at Nicopolis, where I mean to continue during
the winter. But before you come, ſend Zenas, and Apollos; and 13.
ſupply them with what is wanting. The Jewiſh converts, I hope, 14.
contribute their ſhare alſo in theſe neceſſary expences.

All here ſalute you. The grace of Jeſus Chriſt be with you 15.
all! Amen.

END OF THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

PREFACE

TO THE

EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

PHILEMON had been converted by St. Paul to the chriſtian faith. Oneſimus, his ſlave, the bearer of this epiſtle, had run away from him; and had probably robbed him. At Rome, where he endeavoured to lie concealed, he fell in the way of St. Paul, through ſome accident, which is not communicated to us. By him he was converted to the chriſtian faith; brought to a thorough ſenſe of his wickedneſs; and ſent back to his maſter, with the following epiſtle.

Some faſtidious critics have ſhewn an inclination to rid the ſacred canon, if poſſible, of this epiſtle; which they ſeem to think of very little importance to the chriſtian church.—There are many conſiderations however, which I ſhould hope, would obtain more favour in it's behalf.

Firſt, it ſhews the admirable addreſs of St. Paul in converting ſinners. By what means of application he opened a way to the heart of a rude ſlave; dead as it appears to all principle; is matter well worth our notice.

The pleaſing, obliging manner likewiſe, in which the apoſtle applied to Philemon, the ſlave's maſter, is equally intereſting. The whole epiſtle indeed is a model of beautiful compoſition.

Laſtly, it is a noble leſſon to the chriſtian miniſter, to ſee with what heartineſs, and zeal an apoſtle engaged in converting one of the loweſt of all human beings; and how affectionately he treated him, after he was converted. The ſoul of a ſlave was to him of equal value with the ſoul of a prince.——It was indeed through a happy accident, if it was accidental, that when the ſacred canon was framed, this epiſtle to Philemon was placed immediately after thoſe to Timothy and Titus. St. Paul having given the *beſt precepts* to a chriſtian miniſter, it ſeemed highly pertinent to cloſe his rules with *an example*.——It is very probable, that this epiſtle was written at the ſame time with the epiſtle to the Coloſſians; as may be ſeen from many circumſtances of internal evidence, on a compariſon of the two epiſtles.

EPISTLE

TO

PHILEMON.

CHAP. I.

PAUL, and Timothy to Philemon, and his houſehold, grace, mercy, and peace in God and Chriſt! 1. 2. 3.

It is with great ſatisfaction, and thankfulneſs to God, that I hear of your faith, and charity—that, on all occaſions, you have not only ſhewn a chriſtian temper; but given proofs of it alſo by your charitable actions. 4. 5. 6. 7.

As I have been the inſtrument, through God, of your embracing this faith, I might ſpeak with the authority of a ſpiritual father on the ſubject of this letter: but laying that aſide, I chuſe rather to addreſs you on motives of chriſtian charity. 8. 9.

The ſubject of my addreſs, is your ſlave Oneſimus; whom, having now converted, I ſend back to you, changed from a vile fugitive into a penitent chriſtian. Receive him as you would do 10. 11. 12. 13.

9. *Paul the aged.* Dr. Whitby's calculation makes Paul at this time about ſixty-three; ſuppoſing him at the death of Stephen to be about thirty-eight.

11. *To thee unprofitable, but now profitable.* In theſe words the apoſtle might perhaps allude to his name; *Oneſimus* ſignifying *profit*. Names of this kind were given to ſlaves, in expectation of their bringing *advantage* to their maſters.

me. Very gladly ſhould I have detained him here; that in your room he might have been of comfort, and aſſiſtance to me in my
14. impriſonment. But I did not chuſe to do any thing in this matter, without your concurrence; knowing, how much more agreeable it is voluntarily to confer a benefit, than to have it drawn from us by neceſſity.

15. How kindly in this matter has the providence of God acted towards us. You loſt a bad ſlave for a ſhort time; that he might
16. become ſerviceable to you for life.——And yet a ſlave is not now perhaps the name, by which you would call him; but rather a brother. I have eſteemed him as ſuch; and ſo will you. He is now your brother in a double ſenſe; as a man, and as a chriſtian.

17. Whatever regard therefore you have for me, ſhew it to him.
18. If he hath wronged you of any thing, place it to my account. I
19. will repay you. I ſpeak *literally:* I mean not to balance a tem-
20. poral account with a ſpiritual one. Give me therefore the happi-
21. neſs to believe you will grant my requeſt.——But why need I ſo ſpeak? Your kindneſs to me, I know, will do more, than I deſire.

22. I would have you prepare me a lodging; as I truſt, that your prayers, and mine will procure me deliverance, and bring us ſpeedily together.

23. 24. 25. Epaphras, my fellow-priſoner; and all my fellow-labourers here ſalute you. The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you all! Amen!

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20. *Refreſh my bowels.* The word in the original αναπαυσον is very expreſſive: *Eaſe that commotion in my heart.*

END OF THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

PREFACE

TO THE

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

THIS epiſtle ſeems to have been intended for the uſe of the whole Jewiſh people, however diſperſed; tho directed chiefly to thoſe of Judea. It is generally ſuppoſed to have been written originally in Greek; tho it's language is confeſſedly more elegant, than any of St. Paul's other epiſtles. This has occaſioned ſome doubt of it's authenticity; together with it's not being inſcribed with the apoſtle's name. But this was probably omitted *on purpoſe*; as it was evident, (ſee Acts xxii. 21) that St. Paul had made himſelf very obnoxious to the Jews: and as to the language, Dr. Lardner ſuppoſes, that the whole plan and ſentiments of the epiſtle were Paul's (of which there is ſtrong internal evidence) but that he might have employed ſome amanuenſis, (as he did on other occaſions) who expreſſed his thoughts in purer Greek, than he commonly uſed himſelf.

In this epiſtle the apoſtle dwells on the dignity of Chriſt's character; 564——and on the ſuperiority of the goſpel to the law: 565——He ſhews, that, according to prophecy, the goſpel could not have been adminiſtered by angels: 566——He ſhews alſo that the Meſſiah muſt have partaken of human-nature: 567——His ſuperiority to Moſes is

next ſhewn: 568——From thence the apoſtle exhorts the Jews to believe in this great diſpenſation: 568——The reſt of God is next applied to *that reſt*, which the goſpel promiſes: 569——Chriſt is delineated as a high-prieſt: 570——ſuperior to the Jewiſh high-prieſt: 570——The weakneſs of the Jewiſh chriſtians is pointed out in not apprehending theſe doctrines: 571——Melchiſedeck is held out as a type of Chriſt: 572——and from hence the dignity of Chriſt's prieſthood is inferred: 573——The apoſtle recapitulates what he had ſaid: 574——He then conſiders the whole Jewiſh œconomy as a ſyſtem of types: 575——realized in Chriſt: 576——purification, in the legal ſacrifice, he ſays, was only obtained by blood: 577——which was a type of the blood of Chriſt: 577——From hence the apoſtle exhorts to a full dependence on this ſacrifice: 579——He next exemplifies faith in many inſtances: 580——Then exhorting to faith, and piety; he concludes with practical inſtructions: 584.

EPISTLE

TO THE

HEBREWS.

GOD having through various dispensations gradually opened his will to mankind; hath at length revealed it fully by his Son; who being endowed with infinite power, first created the world— then redeemed it—and afterwards resumed his ancient glory: being of a nature infinitely superior to all those heavenly ministers, by whom the law was dispensed. This is very evident from observing his character as marked by the prophets. Is it a language ever used to angels, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?* Was it literally, or typically, spoken of Solomon, *I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son?* And was it not expressive of

CHAP. I.

1. 2. 3.

4.

5.

6.

3. The Son is here represented *as the express image of God*; an idea, which some writers have explained, by the impression, which the wax receives from the engraving of the seal. Philo calls the Logos, Χαρακτηρ καὶ εικων Θεου.

5. As the Messiah was predicted to spring from the house and lineage of David; and as Solomon so far answered this character, and was besides the most illustrious of the Jewish kings, and founded also the temple of Jerusalem; he was considered as a type of Christ.

5. Ps. ii. 7.

5. 2 Sam. vii. 14. 1 Chron. xxii. 10.

6. Ps. xcvii. 7.

the

the dignity of this great character, in his exalted ſtate, when the
7. prophet calls upon *all the angels of God to worſhip him?* The
8. character of angels is that of *miniſtring ſpirits*. Far differently the
prophet ſpeaks of the Son. He is repreſented as having power,
9. and dominion over all created beings—as eſtabliſhing his throne in
10. 11. 12. juſtice, and equity—as the Creator of all things—and as exiſting
13. from eternity. So again, when the prophet ſpeaks of his exalted
ſtation, as ſubduing the grand enemies of mankind, ſin, and death;
14. the expreſſions ſurely are not applicable to angels, who were not
the givers of the law, and the goſpel; but merely the inſtruments
employed in thoſe ſervices.

CHAP. II.

All theſe prophetic characters of the Meſſiah ſhould awaken our
attention to the truths of the goſpel. The inference is plain. If
1. 2. the tranſgreſſion of the Moſaic law, revealed only through the
mediation of angels, ſubjected the Iſraelites to ſo great a penalty,
3. as we find it did; what have we to anſwer for, if we neglect a
law, given by the Son of God; and confirmed to us, not only by the
4. ſtrongeſt human teſtimony; but by the authority of miracles, and
the viſible power of the Holy Ghoſt?

5. That no angelic miniſtration diſpenſed this laſt great revelation of
6. God's will; is plain from the words of David: *What is man that
thou art mindful of him; or the Son of man, that thou viſiteſt him?*

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7. *Made his angels ſpirits*, and *his miniſters a flame of fire*—made them like the wind, and like lightning.

7. Pſ. civ. 4.

12. 13. Pſ. xlv. 6, 7. cii. 25, 26, 27.

12. 13. Pſ. cx. 1.

5. *By the world to come*, is commonly underſtood the *reſtored world*, or the goſpel ſtate. Many Jewiſh writers, and early chriſtians were of opinion from theſe paſſages in St. Paul, and ſome others in Daniel, (particularly chap. x. 13, 21) that the world was divided into different diſtricts, and put under the government of angels: and that in particular the Jewiſh nation was committed to Michael. St. Paul might have a view to this opinion, when he ſays the chriſtian world was ſubject only to Chriſt.

Thou

Thou madeſt him for ſome time lower than the angels; thou crownedſt him with glory, and honour; and didſt ſet him over the works of thy hands. Thou haſt put all things in ſubjection under his feet. Now 7. 8.
theſe words, tho primarily ſpoken of Adam, and his deſcendants, can by no means have their ſole reference to man, or his dominion over the works of creation; which we evidently ſee they have not. But they refer directly to the divine Miniſter of the new 9.
covenant; and mark his character in ſtrong terms. They point out Jeſus who was *made lower than the angels* during his ſtate of humiliation; but after the price of redemption was paid, *crowned with glory and honour.*

Now it pleaſed God, however contrary to Jewiſh prejudices, 10.
that the great Author of our ſalvation ſhould take upon him the nature of thoſe, whom he redeemed; and paſs through a ſtate of 11. 12. 13.
ſuffering. Thus he is repreſented by the prophets, calling mankind *his brethren*—and in other places, calling them *his children.* All theſe paſſages in the prophets point out the human nature of the Meſſiah. He partook of the ſame fleſh and blood with thoſe, whom he re- 14.
deemed that by ſubjecting himſelf to death, he might vanquiſh the power of the devil; and deliver all mankind from the bondage of ſin. 15.
Inſtead of appearing in an angelic form, he appeared as one of the 16.
deſcendants of Abraham; and thought it proper to be, in all reſpects, 17.
like his brethren; that he might be a merciful high-prieſt before God, atoning for the ſins of the people. What an encouragement 18.

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7. *A little*, might better be rendered, *a little while*; as it is in the margin of our Teſtament.

9. Our Saviour, quoting this pſalm, applies it, as St. Paul does. Matt. xxi. 16.

12. Pſ. xxii. 22.

13. Iſ. viii. 17, 18.

14. The devil is here ſaid to have *the power of death*, as his tempting our firſt parents was the original cauſe of death.

is

is it to us, who follow his ſteps, that we are ſuccoured in all our temptations, by one, who in every reſpect hath been tempted like ourſelves?

CHAP. III. 1. 2. But while you reflect on the humanity, and humiliation of Chriſt; conſider, on the other hand, my brethren, his dignity. One of the greateſt characters, which you acknowledge, is that of Moſes. Faithful, no doubt, he was in that appointment, which God 3. 4. intruſted to him. But between Chriſt and Moſes, the ſame difference is eſtabliſhed by God, as we ſee between the maſter, and 5. the ſervant, of a family. Moſes precedes as a preparatory lawgiver, opening the way for ſomething that was to follow. Chriſt 6. comes after, fulfilling the types of the law; and compleating that inſtitution which Moſes had only ſhadowed out.

Of this holy inſtitution, my brethren, we are a part, if we 7. perſevere faithfully in our profeſſion. Remember that paſſage in the pſalms, in which the Iſraelites are exhorted to hear God's voice; 8. and not to *harden their hearts, as their fathers did in the wilderneſs*; 9. when they perſiſted forty years in an obſtinate courſe of diſbelief, 10. 11. and diſobedience; and provoked God at length to forbid their enter- 12. ing the promiſed land. Let this example of your forefathers be an inſtruction to you. They diſbelieved God. Take care that you 13. do not diſbelieve the revelation of his will through Chriſt: but daily incourage, and exhort each other, leſt any of you be hardened 14. through the deceitfulneſs of ſin. All depends on your holding 15. ſteadily your profeſſion to the end; and taking every opportunity 16. 17. 18. of increaſing in chriſtian virtue. Some there were among your forefathers, who did not revolt from their obedience: but the greateſt

3. As the apoſtle had before preferred Chriſt to angels, ſo now he prefers him to Moſes. Chriſt was at the head of his economy. Moſes was only a ſteward.

4. See Numb. xii. 7. in which Moſes is expreſsly called a *ſervant*.

7. Pſalm xcv.

number

number were not permitted to enter the promiſed land; but fell 19.
in the wilderneſs.——Once more therefore let me repeat my exhortations, that this example of unbelief may have it's full weight: CHAP. IV.
and that none of us may forfeit the promiſe of that reſt, which is 1. 2.
offered to *us*, as well as *them*; and which they forfeited through unbelief.

The chriſtian's reſt depends on the ſame promiſe, as that of the 3.
Iſraelites. Obſerve thoſe paſſages of ſcripture, which mention *the reſt of God*. After the creation was finiſhed, God is ſaid *to reſt from* 4.
his work. He is ſaid alſo to *reſt the ſeventh day*—and David makes 5.
an application to certain perſons, who were to *enter into that reſt*. Since therefore ſome muſt enter into that reſt; and the ancient 6.
Iſraelites, to whom it was at firſt applied, did not enter into it; it 7.
is plain, that David had reference to ſome *future reſt*—that is, he 8.
had reference to ſome reſt, beſides that of the land of Canaan: for that *reſt* had been already compleated by Joſhua.——We con- 9.
clude therefore that God's holy ſervants are to expect ſome *future* 10.
reſt; and that this reſt is to be of a holy, and a ſpiritual kind, when they ſhall reſt from their earthly labours; as God is ſaid to reſt, from his work.

Let it be our great endeavour then to enter into this holy reſt; 11.
and make that uſe of the infidelity of our forefathers, which we 12.
ought; conſidering eſpecially, that in the diſpenſation of the goſpel there is a ſtill nicer diſcrimination to be made between good and bad —and that the very thoughts, and intentions of the heart, if impure, become guilt in that diſcerning eye, before which every part of the 13.

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5. Pſ. xcv. 12.

8. By *Jeſus* in this verſe, is meant Joſhua, whoſe name, and office in leading the people to a place of reſt, made him a remarkable type of Chriſt. In the margin he is called Joſhua; and it is only miſleading ignorant readers, to call him Jeſus in the text.

13. *Naked and open*. Some ſuppoſe an alluſion is made here to ſacrificing. As it then appears, whether the victim is pure, or faulty; ſo, &c.

14. creation is open. Having therefore ſo great an high-prieſt, Jeſus the Son of God, who is now making interceſſion for us in heaven,
15. let us hold faſt our faith in ſo merciful a deliverer. For, as I juſt obſerved, we have not now an high-prieſt, who cannot feel our infirmities; but one, who was in every reſpect tempted as we are.
16. Let us then come boldly to the throne of grace, aſſuring ourſelves, that we ſhall find from the true mercy-ſeat of God, ſufficient help in all our diſtreſſes.

CHAP. V. 1. 2. And now conſidering Chriſt in the light of an high-prieſt, let us ſee how much his character, under this idea, is exalted above the Jewiſh high-prieſt.——In the firſt place, the Jewiſh high-prieſt was a frail, and erring man: and tho he might have compaſſion on thoſe, for whom he officiated; yet his compaſſion was founded on a different motive from that of Chriſt. He pitied the
3. frailties of others from feeling his own: and therefore in offering
4. ſacrifices for them, he always included himſelf.——In the ſecond place, tho no man could take upon himſelf the Levitical prieſthood,
5. unleſs called by God, as Aaron was; yet Chriſt was not only
6. appointed by God; but had an everlaſting prieſthood conferred upon
7. 8. him, of which Melchiſedec's was a type.——Again, the prayers, and ſupplications, and ſufferings of Chriſt were infinitely more efficacious, than the atonement of the Jewiſh high-prieſt. Having been raiſed from the dead, and having given us an example of obedience,
9. and reſignation to the will of God; he was conſecrated, as it were, through ſufferings; and making an atonement for the ſins of the

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14. St. Paul here reſumes the ſubject of the high-prieſt, which he had dropped at the beginning of the iiid chapter. The compariſon of Chriſt with Moſes; and of chriſtian immortality with the Jewiſh Canaan, had interrupted his argument.——*With whom we have to do:* προς ον ημιν ο λογος: *of whom we ſpeak.*

15. See chap. ii. 18.

6. See Pſ. cx. 4.

world;

world; he became an eternal high-prieſt, of whom, as I obſerved, 10.
Melchiſedec was a type.

Of this reſemblance between Chriſt, and Melchiſedec I could 11.
ſay many things to you, which would ſhew more fully the ſuperiority of our Lord to the Levitical high-prieſt; but I fear you are not yet diſpoſed to receive them. From the time of your 12. 13. 14.
converſion one ſhould ſuppoſe, you might have become teachers of religion: inſtead of which, I fear, you have not yet digeſted the firſt principles of it. Strong meats are the food of thoſe who are arrived at full age; and milk and lighter food, of children. CHAP. VI.
I fear you are to be numbered among the latter.

However leaving for the preſent the principles of religion, re- 1. 2. 3.
pentance, faith, baptiſm, the communication of ſpiritual gifts, the reſurrection of the dead, and a future judgment, let us proceed, through God's permiſſion, to theſe deeper points. As for thoſe 4. 5. 6.
who have apoſtatized from the truth, after having been enlightened by the goſpel—convinced by it's evidence—and partakers of it's bleſſings; one ſhould ſuppoſe it utterly impoſſible they ſhould 7. 8.
ever again be reſtored. Like ground, which anſwers no longer to the pains of the huſbandman, but in return for it's culture, produces only weeds, they muſt be left to the effect of their ingratitude, and infidelity.—Notwithſtanding however what I ſay, 9.
I am perſuaded better things of the generality of you. And you 10.
may be aſſured, in particular, that God will not forget that charity, by which you have ſo often evidenced your religion; and in which 11.
I hope you will conſtantly perſevere; after the example of all 12.
thoſe holy patriarchs, your forefathers, who through faith, and patience, at length inherited the promiſes. How ſtrict a performer 13.
of his promiſe God is to his faithful ſervants, may be concluded from his oath to Abraham; that he would bleſs, and multiply 14.
him; which promiſe was firſt performed in a temporal way; but 15.
is now fully compleated in the goſpel. Thus God condeſcending 16.

to the manner of men, who confider an oath as the moft decifive
17. proof, confirmed his promife in that way to his obedient fervants.
18. And thus we chriftians, who inherit the fame promife, have the
fame foundation for the performance of it—God's word, confirmed
19. by his oath. On this we fhould depend in all our diftreffes, raifing
our thoughts to the completion of it by that bleffed Redeemer, who
20. hath entered for us into the Holy of Holies—our great high-prieft,
CHAP. VII. and interceffor; of whom (to refume my argument) Melchifedec
was a type.

1. This holy man, who was king of Salem, and prieft of the moft
high God, met Abraham returning from the defeat of the five
2. kings; and bleffing him, received at his hands the tenth of all
he had taken.——Now here the firft thing that ftrikes us, in the
comparifon between this prince, and Chrift, is the name; Mel-
3. chifedec fignifying *king of righteoufnefs*; and Salem *the city of peace.*
——We are next ftruck with the mode of his defcent. The Levitical high-prieft preferves his genealogy pure from Aaron. But of the lineage of Melchifedec nothing is faid. Neither his birth, nor his death is noticed. Hence therefore he becomes a type of that great high-prieft, who had neither beginning of days, nor

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20. From ver. 10, chap. v.

1. See Gen. xiv. 18.

3. *Without father, without mother, &c.* This is a very common way in fpeaking of thofe, whofe anceftors are unknown. Thus Livy fays, Patre nullo, matre ferva. l. IV. And Seneca (epif. 108) fpeaking of the two Roman kings, Servius Tullius, and Ancus Marcius, fays, Alter patrem non habet; alter matrem. Απατωρ, και αμητωρ, were common expreffions among the Greeks alfo, to diftinguifh people of unknown families. Among the Jews it was always conceived, that altho the Meffiah was to be of the houfe and lineage of David, there was ftill fome myfterious obfcurity with regard to his birth. Thus his enemies remarked, that Jefus could not be the Meffiah, becaufe they *knew him to be the carpenter's fon:* Mark vi. 3. And again, *When Chrift fhall come, no one fhall know whence he is.* John vii. 27.——The application of fuch a phrafe to Chrift, as that *he had neither beginning of days, nor end of life,* can mean nothing, I think, if it do not mean a unity with the Father.

end

end of life.——Then again conſider the greatneſs of that character, 4.
to whom even the patriarch Abraham paid tithes. The Levitical 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.
prieſt, who by the law received tithes of the people, may be ſaid 10. 11. 12. 13. 14.
to have paid tithes himſelf to Melchiſedec, in the perſon of his progenitor Abraham.——Conſider alſo the ſuperiority, which that great high-prieſt aſſumed in bleſſing our father Abraham: for undoubtedly it is the greater, who bleſſes the leſs; and not the leſs, who bleſſes the greater.

From what hath been ſaid then it appears firſt, that the Levitical prieſthood can, by no means, be conſidered as a perfect inſtitution; for then the order of Aaron needed not to have been ſuperſeded by the order of Melchiſedec.——Secondly it appears, that as there is a change in the prieſthood, there is a change alſo in the law. For as the people received the law under the prieſthood; a new prieſthood implies a new law. The tribe of Judah, from which our Lord ſprang, had evidently no connection with the altar.——Thirdly, it is evident, that from the 15.
excellency of the new prieſthood, the law muſt alſo take a new 16.
excellence; and muſt be changed, agreeably to the nature of the
prieſt, from a ceremonial ritual, into a ſpiritual ſervice. Other- 17.
wiſe what advantage ariſes from a prieſt, who is to *live for ever?* 18.
The law of Moſes is diſannulled, becauſe being weak, and imperfect, it was unable to draw it's obſervers to perfection. The 19.
covenant of the goſpel leads directly to God.——Again, let us 20.
conſider the confirmation of this covenant. *The Lord ſware*, ſaith 21.
the prophet, *and will not repent, Thou art a prieſt for ever, after the order of Melchiſedec.* By no ſuch deſignation was the Levitical

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5. 6. In the text the *bleſſing*, and *receiving of tythes* are united. I thought it might be eaſier, and might place the reſemblance in a ſtronger light, to ſeparate them.

19. The neuter ἐδὲν is often taken for *perſons* as well as *things*.

21. See Pſalm cx. 4.

prieſt

22. prieſt conſecrated. Therefore the new covenant, of which Chriſt is the high-prieſt, is the more excellent, becauſe the more ſtrongly
23. confirmed.——From the ſame prophecy we are aſſured, that it is unchangeable alſo. In the Levitical prieſthood death was con-
24. tinually introducing change: but Chriſt, ſays the prophet, is eſta-
25. bliſhed a *prieſt for ever*.——Laſtly, from laying all theſe conſiderations together, we may reſt aſſured, that we have an eternal, unchangeable high-prieſt, who is continually making interceſſion for us; and that we ſhall find in him a Redeemer, who is able
26. to ſave all, who come to God in his name. Holy, and ſpotleſs himſelf; of dignity ſufficient to make an atonement; he offers,—
27. not like the Levitical prieſt, an offering firſt for his own ſins, and then for the ſins of the people—but he offers himſelf, once for
28. all, a ſacrifice for the ſins of mankind; thus completely fulfilling that great prophecy of the pſalmiſt (given long after the law) that a new prieſthood ſhould be conſecrated, not ſubject to the infirmities, and changes of the Levitical one; but abſolutely pure, holy, and eternal.

CHAP. VIII.

1. 2. 3. 4. The ſum of what I have ſaid, is this, that we chriſtians have a high-prieſt as far ſuperior, in every inſtance, to the Jewiſh one; as a conſtant interceſſor at the throne of God, is to a prieſt officiating
5. in an earthly temple. Such interceſſion may be conſidered as making him a *continual high-prieſt*; tho the great ſacrifice is offered; and he is now removed into heaven. Temple-ſacrifices the Jewiſh prieſt was ſufficient to offer. But here is a ſervice, which no earthly prieſt could perform. In fine, then, the Jewiſh high-prieſt was only a mere type of the heavenly one; as the Jewiſh tabernacle was of the throne of God. This was clearly expreſſed at the giving

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28. Pſ. cx. 4.
5. See Exod. xxv. 40, and xxvi. 30.

of

of the law; when Moſes was ordered to make every thing *after the pattern*, which, in a heavenly viſion, was ſhewn to him *on the mount*. 6.
And indeed there is as much difference between the two miniſtrations; as between the temporal promiſe of a land of Canaan, and the heavenly one of an eternal habitation.

Now this great change of one covenant for the other, is founded 7.
on the deficiency of the law, and the excellence of the goſpel. If the firſt had been perfect, there had been no room for a ſecond. Thus 8.
the prophet Jeremiah ſpeaks: *Behold the days come, when I will make a new covenant with the houſe of Iſrael, and with the houſe of Judah—* 9.
not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day, when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt; becauſe they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, ſaith the 10.
Lord. The prophet having thus far ſhewn God's intention to 11.
ſuperſede the Jewiſh inſtitution, proceeds farther to ſhew the nature of the chriſtian religion. He touches on the gracious intention of it, as a covenant of mercy to mankind; he declares God's promiſe of bringing the doctrines of it home to the conſciences of men by his Holy Spirit; and concludes his view of it, by mentioning the grand point of difference between it, and the Jewiſh religion—*it's* 12.
making a full atonement for the ſins of mankind. He calls it, you 13.
obſerve, a *new covenant*; which plainly implies the abolition of the *old*.

This great intended change appears alſo from the whole economy CHAP. IX.
of the Jewiſh tabernacle, which prefigured ſomething, that was to 1.
ſucceed. It appeared itſelf to be a mere temporary matter. The
outer part of it, called the ſanctuary, contained the golden candle- 2.
ſtick, and the table of ſhew-bread: the *inner* part, or the Holy of 3.

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8. Jer. xxxi. 31, &c.

Holies

4. Holies, was ſeparated from the other, and contained the golden
cenſer, wherewith the high-prieſt made the yearly atonement—the
ark—the golden pot with manna—Aaron's rod—the tables of the
5. covenant—and the cherubims of glory ſhadowing the mercy-ſeat;
the figurative intention of all which I ſhall not here particularly
6. examine. In the firſt of theſe apartments the prieſts performed
7. their daily ſervice: but the ſecond was a ſacred receſs, ſhut out
from all inſpection; into which the high-prieſt alone entered; and
that but once a year, to make atonement, with ſacrifice, for his
8. own ſins, and the ſins of the people. All this ceremony was
plainly intended to ſhew, that ſomething was yet wanting to open
9. 10. the Holy of Holies to all mankind: and that the various ſervices
performed, conſiſting merely of obſervances, of no value in them-
ſelves, were figures only of that perfect ſacrifice, which ſhould
afterwards take place.

11. 12. All theſe types, and ceremonies Chriſt hath realized; offering
his own blood, inſtead of the Levitical ſacrifice of goats, and calves;
entering the true Holy of Holies; and making for us, not an *annual*,
13. but a *perpetual* atonement. And well may we ſuppoſe, if the
ſprinkling of the blood of animals purified the Jew from all his
14. legal defilements; that the blood of Chriſt offered, through the
15. divine appointment, without ſpot to God, will purge us from ſin.
Thus Chriſt becomes the mediator of a new, and better covenant;
redeeming by his death, and reſtoring to an eternal inheritance,
even thoſe who lived under the firſt covenant.

16. Now the death of a teſtator is abſolutely neceſſary to give force
17. to a teſtament. While the teſtator lives, the teſtament, or covenant,

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4. It appears from the text, that the ark contained theſe ſeveral things: whereas we are aſſured (1 Kings viii. 9) that it contained only the two tables of ſtone. Εν η therefore muſt refer to the tabernacle.

16. The word Διαθηκη ſignifies here both a *teſtament*, and a *covenant*. St. Paul perhaps conſidered a *divine covenant*, as a *teſtament*, becauſe of it's being *unalterable*.

is

is not binding. Accordingly the firſt teſtament, to make it a proper 18.
type of the ſecond, was conſecrated with blood. Thus Moſes 19.
after he had read the law, took blood; and ſprinkled the people,
ſaying, This is the blood of the teſtament, which God hath en- 20.
joined. And thus the tabernacle, as ſoon as it was erected, together 21.
with all it's utenſils, were ſprinkled with blood; without which 22.
indeed we have not in the law any idea of remiſſion. God thought 23.
it neceſſary therefore by ſuch a conſecration to repreſent that ſacred
blood, which was afterwards to be ſhed for the ſins of mankind.
And as the Holy of Holies is the repreſentation of heaven; ſo Chriſt, 24. 25. 26.
the great mediator, enters it; not like the Jewiſh high-prieſt, annu-
ally with the blood of animals; but once for all, on this laſt great
revelation of God's will; offering his own blood, as a ſacrifice
for the ſins of mankind. As man alſo is appointed to undergo the 27. 28.
two great ſtates of death, and judgment; ſo Chriſt, having firſt
died for ſin, will appear, on his ſecond coming, without any idea
of atonement, merely as our judge.

CHAP. X.

The whole legal ritual then is a mere typical repreſentation: nor
were it's ſacrifices ever intended to make a full atonement. We 1. 2.
prove

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19. St. Paul ſays, that Moſes ſprinkled the book, as well as the people, with blood. But the paſſage of Moſes (Exod. xxiv. 7, 8) to which St. Paul alludes, does not mention the book as being ſprinkled; either in the LXX, from which St. Paul commonly quotes; or in our tranſlation, which is taken from the original. The vulgate is ambiguous: *Accipiens ſanguinem vitulorum, ipſum quoque librum, et populum omnem aſperſit.*

21. In Exod. xl. where the conſecration of the tabernacle is related, blood is not ſpecified. But, no doubt, St. Paul, who was ſo well verſed in the Jewiſh ceremonial, underſtood, that a purification through blood was meant by the words *hallowing*, and *ſanctifying*: and accordingly Joſephus expreſsly ſays, that Moſes conſecrated the tabernacle, and all it's utenſils with oil, and blood: θεραπευειν την σκηνην, και τα περι αυτην σκευη, ελαιω, και τω αιματι. Antiq. III. 9.

22. In caſes of inability a portion of fine flour is ſubſtituted as a ſin-offering, for the life of an animal. Levit. v. 11.

2. *For then they would not have ceaſed.* The vulgate, the Syriac, many good MSS, and even the margin of our own tranſlation, have it, *For then would they have ceaſed.* The *negative*, in

prove this from the very nature of them. If they made a *full atonement*; what end was anſwered by their repetition? The wor-
3. ſhipper, once purged, would have been freed from ſin. But that was not the caſe. In every annual expiation, all paſt ſins were
4. again remembered. In the nature of things indeed it is not poſſible,
5. 6. that the blood of bulls, and of goats, can take away ſin. And in this light we conſider that prophetic paſſage in the pſalms; in which Chriſt, when coming into the world, is thus repreſented addreſſing the Father: *Sacrifices, and offerings for ſin Thou haſt*
7. 8. 9. *rejected: but thou haſt provided a body for an offering. I embrace, O God, thy gracious deſigns: and agreeably to the prediction of all thy holy prophets, ſhall fulfill it.* Thus Chriſt by ſubſtituting his own body in the room of the offerings, and ſacrifices of the law,
10. plainly eſtabliſhes the one on the abolition of the other.——By this holy ſacrifice then we are juſtified; giving up every idea of juſtifi-
11. cation by the law—not truſting in an earthly high-prieſt, and the

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in our tranſlation, intirely deſtroys the ſenſe; unleſs indeed the ſentence be read interrogatively.

5. The paſſage from Pſalm xl. from whence this verſe is quoted, is ſingular. The words, *but a body haſt thou prepared*, are in the original Hebrew, *mine ears haſt thou bored*; alluding to the Jewiſh cuſtom of boring the ears of ſlaves. Our tranſlation of the Pſalms renders it totally without any meaning at all; *mine ears haſt thou opened.*—The interpretation is, that Chriſt is repreſented as ſubmitting to the will of his Father, with all the obedience of a willing ſlave.

But ſtill how comes it, that St. Paul, inſtead of ſaying, *mine ears haſt thou bored*, ſays, *a body haſt thou prepared me?*—This is ſingular; but the truth is, the apoſtle, inſtead of quoting from the original Hebrew, quotes from the ſeptuagint; which renders the original Hebrew very happily, as the apoſtle has quoted it. Slaves were always conſidered both by the Jews, and Greeks, as *mere bodies*. Thus Raguel gave Tobias half his ſlaves, cattle, and money—σωματα, και κτηνη, και αργυριον: and thus the ſlaves of the men of Sichem, are called τα σωματα. Many inſtances alſo occur in heathen writers. The LXX therefore, by a very happy interpretation, tranſlate the act of *boring the ear*, by the word σωμα, which includes the true ſenſe; and *here* ſignifies both the *body offered*, and the *form* (the μορφην δουλου, Phil. ii. 7.) in which our bleſſed Lord appeared.

atonement

atonement of temple ſacrifices—but in a high-prieſt, who having 12.
offered himſelf a ſacrifice for ſin once for all, ſat down for ever on
the right hand of God; triumphing over death, and making a full 13. 14.
atonement for all his faithful ſervants. For this is the ſenſe of the 15. 16.
prophecy of Jeremiah, which I quoted above. Having ſpoken of
the *new covenant*, which God was about to make; and the new
laws he was about to eſtabliſh; the prophet adds, that in this 17.
new covenant, a compleat atonement ſhould be made for the ſins
of mankind. In fine then, if you allow the force of this prophecy 18.
thus far; you muſt conclude farther, that the offerings, and ſacrifices of the temple-ſervice are now rendered entirely uſeleſs.

Since therefore, my brethren, we have thus a new, and living 19. 20.
way opened to us into the Holy of Holies, by the blood of Chriſt;
and ſince we have an eternal high-prieſt preſiding there, making 21.
conſtant interceſſion for us, let us draw near with full faith, and 22.
aſſurance in his mercy. Let us reject all dependence on legal purification; and lay the ſtreſs on the purification of the heart. Let 23.
us ſteadily perſevere in the profeſſion of our faith; raiſing our
minds with the promiſes we have received. Let no prejudices 24.
againſt our brethren ſubſiſt among us; but let us ſhew our charity by an unreſerved communication of kindneſs. Of one thing 25.
let me particularly remind you: continue regularly your chriſtian
aſſemblies; and return not to the temple-worſhip. Even in a
worldly light it is prudent; for a dreadful calamity, you may aſſure
yourſelves, hangs over this unhappy country.—But the great point 26. 27.
to be conſidered is, that if you apoſtatize, you reject the only means
of drawing you to the truth, which God hath thought proper to
promulge. You give up the ſacrifice of Chriſt; and place yourſelves among thoſe, who having now no farther means of converſion, muſt await the juſt indignation of God. Will that God, 28.

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15. 16. See Heb. viii. 10, 12.

29. think you, who punifhed every tranfgreffion of the Mofaic law with fo much rigour; fee without offence the ftronger evidence of the gofpel treated with contempt even by thofe, who have been once fanctified—the Son of God defpifed—his great atone-
30. ment rejected—and all the miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit fet at nought? Remember that awful fentence, *Vengeance is mine; I will repay*, faith the Lord. And again: *The Lord fhall judge*
31. *his people*. Confider what it is to fall into the hands of a Being,
32. whofe attribute is *eternal juftice*. Recollect the conflicts you en-
33. 34. dured after your firft converfion—the reproaches, and perfecutions you underwent—and your fteady adherence to me, and others of the apoftles of Chrift; fuffering the lofs of your worldly poffeffions through faith in an eternal inheritance.

35. Caft not away therefore that faith, which is the earneft of this
36. eternal inheritance. Shew yourfelves God's faithful fervants; truft
37. 38. him for your reward; and be not difcouraged, if you are not immediately delivered. In God's good time you fhall receive affiftance. Remember the words of the Prophet: *He that cometh, will come; and will not tarry:* that is, they who obey him, may depend on his affiftance. And immediately after, *the juft fhall live by faith.* But he who renounces his faith, muft remember alfo, that he re-
39. nounces the bleffings annexed to it. I fhould be forry to fuppofe, that any of you, my brethren, are of that number. Let me rather
CHAP. XI. fuppofe you among thofe, who confider your faith as the only
1. 2. ground of your falvation. Faith is ftill what it always has been, through

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30. Deut. xxxii. 35, 36.

38. Hab. ii. 3, 4.

1. There is little doubt, I think, but the *faith* here meant, is that *faith in the promifes of a Meffiah*, which ftrongly poffeffed all the ferious part of mankind, in the early ages of the world. Through this faith we fuppofe Abel offered his facrifice to God. Noah, who was a type of Chrift, could not be ignorant, one fhould fuppofe, of what he himfelf repreffented. Abraham, to

through the whole hiſtory of your forefathers. It may be called the realizing of our hopes, as nothing can be the object of our hopes, which has not firſt been the object of our faith. It may be called alſo the evidence of ſuch things, as our knowledge cannot reach. Through faith we are aſſured, that the works of crea- 3.
tion were formed by the word of God. It was faith in the pro- 4.
miſes of God, that gave a value to the ſacrifice of Abel; and

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to whom the promiſe of a Redeemer was renewed, no doubt, had a clear idea, in all his typical tranſactions, of the nature of that promiſe. The patriarchs too acted under the ſame impreſſion; and Moſes ſhewed, in all his actions, that the *reproach of Chriſt was greater riches to him, than the treaſures of Egypt*. Under the influence of this promiſe alſo all the worthies of Iſrael acted—their judges adminiſtered juſtice—their heroes fought—their martyrs died—and their prophets predicted future events.

On the ſuppoſition alſo of this general faith in the promiſes of God, (which, no doubt, were more or leſs clear to different perſons,) we account for ſeveral crimes in the bible-hiſtory, which cannot well be accounted for on any other ſuppoſition: at leaſt, we cannot account for Moſes's mentioning ſeveral of them, unleſs with a view to ſhew how ſtrongly the promiſe of a Saviour wrought in the early ages of the world. We follow the clue, which St. Paul has given us; who mentions ſome of the judges of Iſrael, as acting under the influence of this faith, tho they were certainly guilty of very unwarrantable actions.

On the birth of Cain, Eve declared, *ſhe had gotten a man from the Lord*; ſuppoſing moſt probably that Cain was the promiſed Saviour. Cain, adopting, as is alſo probable, his mother's opinion; and finding that Abel was more favoured by God than he was, might ground his jealouſy againſt his brother, on this circumſtance.

To a jealouſy of the ſame kind we may refer the enmity between Jacob, and Eſau; and the machinations of Joſeph's brethren; who might think him, as the child of Rachel, and their father's favourite, the promiſed ſeed.

To this deſire alſo of giving birth to the promiſed ſeed, we may refer ſeveral of the accounts of polygamy, and concubinage, which we meet with in the bible hiſtory. Abraham's intercourſe with Hagar was plainly of this kind. Even the ſtory of Lot's daughters may be referred to this ſource. As far as appears (ſee Gen. xix. 8) they were virtuous women: but being now ſhut out from all mankind; and being utterly deprived of the great hope, which poſſeſſed all the women of thoſe days, who believed in the promiſes of God, they were led into this abominable action. It appears evidently from the face of the ſtory, that they had no wiſh, but that of having offſpring: and that they rather gloried in what they had done, ſeems plain from the names they gave their children, which ſignify the mode of their birth.

made

made it an example to future times. Cain's, being not of the ex-
5. piatory kind, was not founded in faith. It was the ſame faith,
6. that carried Enoch to heaven without his ſuffering the pains of mor-
tality. He pleaſed God: and we know there is no other way of
pleaſing him; but by a ſteady, and active faith in his providence,
7. and promiſes. It was faith, that ſaved Noah, and his family in
8. 9. the ark; and infidelity that deſtroyed the reſt of mankind. It was
ſaith, which carried Abraham into an unknown country, where
10. he dwelt with his poſterity; reſting on the general promiſe of God
11. for a better inheritance. Through faith alſo Sarah, in her old
12. age, bore a ſon; from which child of faith ſprang the whole
people of Iſrael.——All the eminent patriarchs died before the
completion of the promiſes, they had received: but having full
ſaith in them, they conſidered themſelves, in this world, only as
14. 15. on a journey; paſſing to their heavenly home. For if they had
regarded only temporal things, their proſpects lay fairer in the
16. country they had left. But it is plain they had better hopes.
Therefore God profeſſed himſelf to be their protector; and pre-
17. pared for them a manſion of future happineſs. By faith Abraham
18. offered Iſaac; tho in him he expected a completion of all the
19. promiſes, which God had made him. But as, at firſt, he had
miraculouſly received a ſon; he concluded, that God could as
20. eaſily reſtore him. Through faith in the promiſes of God, Iſaac
21. bleſſed Jacob, and Eſau. And afterwards Jacob, when he was
22. dying in Egypt, bleſſed the two ſons of Joſeph. Joſeph alſo, on

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14. Πατριδα επιζητουσι, ſays the original; which we tranſlate coldly, *They ſeek a country*. But πατρις ſignifies, not *a country*; but our *native country—the place where our anceſtors have lived*.

21. *Leaning on the top of his ſtaff*. Thus it is rendered in the ſeptuagint; from which the ſacred writers commonly quote: but in the Hebrew, it is *bowed*, or *leaned on his bed*; which conſidering the patriarch was then dying, ſeems to be the better ſenſe.

his

his death-bed, predicted the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt; and in testimony of his faith, ordered his own bones to be carried into the land of Canaan.——The extraordinary preser- 23.
vation of Moses was owing to an act of faith in his parents: the promises of God weighed more with them, than the threatnings of the king. Through the same principle also Moses himself, when 24.
he came to years of discretion, renounced all connections with the court of Pharoah; and chose rather to partake of the afflictions 25.
of his own people, than to enjoy the pleasures of a sinful life. He 26.
had full trust in the promises of God; and preferred the hard duties, to which they led him, before all the softness, and luxury of Egypt. His faith carried him forward to an expected Messiah; 27.
and in this confidence he conducted the Israelites out of Egypt, and despised the wrath of Pharoah. Through faith he kept the first 28.
passover; and through the sprinkling of blood, averted the destroying angel from his people: and lastly, through faith he passed 29.
the red sea; while the Egyptians pursuing him, were destroyed.——
In the sequel of the Israelitish history, Joshua was enabled to throw 30.
down the walls of Jericho through faith—by which also Rahab 31.
was saved in the midst of a general massacre.——But it would be 32. 33. 34.
endless to enumerate all the champions, and all the prophets, and 35. 36. 37. 38.
martyrs of the bible-history; and enter into all their actions, and sufferings, through this great virtue.——Thus faith has been the 39.
leading principle from the earliest times to these: and tho *we* have 40.
seen the completion of those promises, which *they* only saw at a

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26. *Esteeming the reproach of Christ*; that is, the reproaches, to which a belief in the Messiah led him.

37. Επειρασθησαν, *were tempted*. The meaning is commonly supposed to be, *they were tempted to renounce their faith by threatnings*. Some reject the expression entirely as it is not found in several MSS; while others again suppose the right reading was επυρασθησαν, they were *burnt alive*.

distance;

diſtance; yet God hath left ſufficient room for the exerciſe of our faith alſo in the duties of our more perfect covenant; that we might partake with them in the ſame bleſſed reward of faith and holineſs.

CHAP. XII.

Under the influence then of ſuch numerous examples in the
1. 2. exerciſe of this great virtue, let us lay aſide every incumbrance, and run with patience our chriſtian courſe; ſetting chiefly before us, as the point to aim at, the example of our bleſſed Lord, who through a life of ſorrow, and diſtreſs, entered eternal glory. And
3. when you feel yourſelves fainting in this great conflict, renew your endeavours by conſidering what accumulated miſery your great Leader
4. underwent for your ſakes.——Beſides, your ſufferings have yet been light, compared with thoſe of ſuch holy men, as have offered up their lives for religion. Your ſufferings have yet only been chaſtiſe-
5. ments for ſin. Have you forgotten the exhortations of ſcripture, which ſpeak to all ſuffering ſinners: *My ſon, take patiently the chaſtening of the Lord; and let it urge you to ſerve him with greater diligence:*
6. *for the correction of the Lord is an inſtance of his love.* By chaſtiſing
7. you, therefore, God ſhews himſelf your father. It is a fatherly duty.
8. To be without chaſtiſement, would argue you not to be under the
9. diſcipline of a father. And if we reſpect an earthly father for his attention to his children; much more ought we to reverence our
10. heavenly father; who does not, as the earthly father, correct us on
11. worldly motives; but for the benefit of our immortal ſouls. For the preſent, no doubt, every degree of correction is painful: but happy
12. is he, who can conſider it as an exerciſe of his virtue. Lift up
13. therefore your feeble hands, and bend your ſtiffened knees; and amend your faults under the correcting hand of your heavenly

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Chap. XII. The beginning of this chapter ſhould be read, and ſtudied by all, who are in affliction.

5. Prov. iii. 11, 12.

father.

father. Live peaceably with men; and piously with God; and 14.
you shall be inheritors of God's holy kingdom. But take care, 15.
that you renounce not, in any degree, the faith you have received.
Take care not to mix the doctrines of the world with the truths of 16. 17.
religion. Remember the case of Esau, who for a morsel of food
sold his birth-right. He found it impossible to recover that privilege,
after he had once lost it: and it is justly to be apprehended, that all
apostates may bring themselves into the same dreadful circumstances.—
Much more guilty would the christian apostate be, than the Jewish. 18. 19. 20.
The law of Moses was given with all those circumstances of terrific 21.
grandeur, which struck it's observers with fear. Even Moses himself
was terrified with the awful appearance of that wonderful transaction.
Whereas you, instead of standing trembling at the bottom of a 22. 23.
mountain, flaming with fire from heaven, are admitted, on the
easy conditions of the gospel, to the blessed society of heaven,
consisting of saints, and angels—even to the presence of God himself
—and to Jesus, the mediator of this blessed covenant; whose blood 24.
did not cry, like that of Abel, for vengeance; but called down
mercy.

Take care therefore that you reject not so gracious a call: for 25.
if they who apostatized from the Mosaic law—a law delivered only
by the mediation of man, were punished with death; what punish-
ment do they deserve, who reject the evidence of the Son of God 26.

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18. *The mount that might be touched.* I cannot find there are any copies, authorizing that reading, which, one should suppose, the sense requires—*The mount that might not be touched.* If we take the expression, as we read it, we must consider it as barely expressing an *earthly mount*—a mount that was the *object of our senses*—that *might be touched*—in opposition to the heavenly one.

21. It is supposed, that St. Paul alludes in this passage about Moses to the LXX translation of Deut. ix. 19. εκφοβος ειμαι δια τον θυμον.

24. The apostle probably alludes to Gen. iv. 10. *Thy brother's blood crieth to me from the ground.*

26. Alluding to Haggai ii. 6. 7.

from

from heaven? That voice, which at firſt ſhook the earth, at the giving of the law, we are aſſured by the prophet, ſhall once more ſhake, not the earth only; but heaven itſelf: that is, the law, which was but a worldly inſtitution, is now fulfilled in the goſpel,
27. which adds heaven to the ſcheme.——There is ſomething farther obſervable in this prophecy. The expreſſion *once more* indicates a change; and that the former inſtitution ſhould be ſuperſeded by
28. the latter.——We have now therefore an inſtitution, which fully enables us to pay that true worſhip to God, which he expects;
29. but at the ſame time we muſt remember, that in proportion to the greatneſs of the advantage, a penalty is annexed to our diſobedience.

CHAP. XIII.

I ſhall conclude my epiſtle with inculcating a few practical
1. duties.——Among theſe, let charity take the lead. Make no
2. diſtinction between Jew, and Gentile converts. As there is often a reſort of ſtrangers among you, be ready to ſhew your hoſpitality to all. The patriarchs often entertained angels: you may often
3. entertain ſaints.——Forget not thoſe, who are in a ſtate of ſuffering for the goſpel; whether they are in bonds; or in any other affliction; remembering, that, in theſe times, you are all liable to the ſame
4. trials.——Marriage is certainly an honourable ſtate; but every other
5. 6. connection between the ſexes is abſolutely forbidden.——Be moderate in all your deſires, and ſatisfied with what you have; truſting
7. in God's promiſe to provide for you, and protect you.——Remember with affection, and zeal the inſtruction, and holy example of thoſe firſt profeſſors of the chriſtian faith, who have gone before

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2. *Some have entertained angels unawares.* This is rather intended as an *encomium* on hoſpitality, than as *a motive* to it.—The Indian Bramins turn this ſentiment into a *motive*; inſtructing their diſciples, that ſuperior beings often deſcend in likeneſs of ordinary travellers, and reward ſuch as ſhew kindneſs to them.

7. It is rather ſuppoſed, that St. Paul, in this paſſage, alludes to their dead, than living paſtors: and that the preſent tenſe ſtands for the imperfect. He mentions their living paſtors, ver. 17. See Pyle, Doddridge, &c.

you;

you; and laid down their lives for it's ſake: and keep always
in memory the great end, which inſpired them—the everlaſting 8.
promiſes of our bleſſed Lord: and let theſe promiſes keep you ſteady 9.
in your faith, and in the grace of God; which you will find more
productive of happineſs, than the ceremonies of the law ever were.
The Jew indeed, while he continues ſuch, cannot partake of the 10.
chriſtian altar. By his own law he cannot. The bodies of thoſe 11.
beaſts, which were ſacrificed for the expiation of ſin, were carried
without the camp, and burnt, but never eaten. As Chriſt ful- 12.
filled that type, he was put to death without the city. Of his
body therefore the Jew, while he continues ſuch, cannot par-
take. But let us chriſtians follow him without the gate; bear- 13.
ing patiently every reproach, which the Jew can lay upon us; 14.
and conſidering not this earthly Jeruſalem, but heaven, as our 15.
home.—Through Chriſt then let us offer up our praiſes, and
thankſgivings to God; always remembering, that the beſt ſacri- 16.
fice is a holy life.——Pay all proper reſpect to your ſpiritual paſtors, 17.
who watch over you. God grant they may give an account of
their miniſtry among you with joy! Their ſorrow will certainly
beſpeak your unprofitableneſs under their inſtruction.——Let us 18. 19.
be the ſubject of your conſtant prayers; particularly that we may
ſoon be delivered from our enemies. However ill-treated we are,
I hope our preaching, and converſation, hath ever been ſincere
and inoffenſive.

May the God of peace, who raiſed up Chriſt from the dead, 20.
accepting his blood as an atonement for ſin, aſſiſt you in living
obediently to his will, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; to whom 21.
be glory, and honour, for ever, and ever, Amen!

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11. See Levit. xvi. 27.

22. I hope you will receive the exhortation of this ſhort letter with
23. that kindneſs, with which it is written: and as Timothy is now at liberty, I ſhall be able ſoon to accompany him in a viſit to you.
24. Salute all the elders of the church in our name; and accept the ſalutation of all the brethren in Italy.
25. Grace be with you all. Amen!

END OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

PREFACE.

TO THE

EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES.

THIS epiſtle was written by James, the ſon of Alpheus, ſometimes called James the leſs; or James the juſt. He is ſuppoſed alſo to to have been the firſt biſhop of Jeruſalem, and is mentioned in ſcripture as our *Lord's brother;* which probably means only a near relation. The other James, the ſon of Zebedee, and brother of John, ſuffered martyrdom very early in the chriſtian æra *.

This epiſtle ſtands foremoſt of the ſeven epiſtles, which are called *catholic*, from their addreſſing no particular church; but the whole body of believers; tho one, or two of them are addreſſed to particular perſons.

In this epiſtle, the apoſtle firſt encourages his chriſtian readers to bear with patience the trials they ſhould meet with; and conſider them as ſent from God; and improve them to the purpoſes of religion. He preſſes upon his readers meekneſs, and gentleneſs to each other, as the teſt of their ſincerity; and highly blames all partiality of behaviour between man and man, as wholly inconſiſtent with chriſtian charity. He ſhews that faith itſelf, without charity, is of no avail—and inforces his doctrine by ſeveral examples. He dwells next on the government of the tongue: and in the beginning of the IVth chapter, addreſſes him-

* See Acts xii. 2.

ſelf,

ſelf, as is generally ſuppoſed, to the *unbelieving Jews*. But, at the eleventh verſe of the ſame chapter, returning again to his chriſtian readers, he taxes them with too much worldly mindednefs; and ſtrictly injoins them, as he began, to be patient, and forbearing under their perſecutions. He then mentions the practice of ſwearing (to which from Jewiſh cuſtom, they were probably much addicted) and ſtrictly forbids it: concluding with an earneſt exhortation to endeavour to draw ſinners to repentance.

The authenticity of this very intereſting part of the ſacred canon ſeems never to have been queſtioned in early times. Indeed it could not; for it is found in the Syriac verſion; which is ſuppoſed to have been made as early as the beginning of the ſecond century. But it is very remarkable, that Luther took offence at it; and wiſhed to exclude it from the other ſcriptures. The apoſtle's idea of juſtification, it is imagined, was the ſtumbling-block. It is ſaid however by Wolfius, and others, that Luther lived to change his opinion.

GENERAL EPISTLE

OF

ST. JAMES.

CHAP. I.

JAMES, a ſervant of God, and Chriſt, to all the Jewiſh chriſtians, in whatever parts diſperſed—greeting! 1.

Conſider it, my brethren, as matter rather of joy, than of grief, 2.
that you are exerciſed with various trials; as by theſe you learn 3.
ſubmiſſion to the divine will. When your hearts are truly formed 4.
by this holy exerciſe, you have attained the perfection of religion.
Through human power indeed this holy temper is not to be attained. 5.
It is fervent prayer to God, that will draw his aſſiſtance on the
pious endeavours of his ſervants. But your prayers muſt be founded 6. 7. 8.
in faith. The unſteady chriſtian muſt never expect, his petitions
will reach the throne of God. Our holy religion furniſhes proper 9.
conſolation to every ſtation of life. Are we in a low condition?
Let us conſider to what a heavenly ſtate we are exalted. Are we 10. 11.
reduced from better circumſtances? God hath providentially re-

1. The twelve tribes ſtill exiſted, at leaſt in foreign parts, as may be learned from Joſephus, and others; tho we read only of two, who returned *in form* from captivity. See Lardner's Cred. p. I. chap. III.

moved

moved us from a multitude of temptations, which might have
oppreſſed us; and has, at worſt, only taken from us, what in courſe
12. we muſt preſently give up. Bear the trials then of this world with
pious reſignation; and look forward to that reward, which awaits
your perſeverance.

13. Nor let any man pretend to excuſe himſelf by ſaying, God threw
temptations in his way. It is impious to ſuppoſe, that a pure being
14. 15. can be the author of ſin. Every man's ſins are certainly on his
own head. He ſuffers his luſts to intice him. Hence ſin is pro-
duced; hence death came into the world; and hence man's loſt
16. condition. Do not then, my brethren, fall into ſo pernicious an
17. error; but conſider God, unchangeable in his nature, as the author
18. only of good. Through his free grace he created us. Through
19. his free grace he hath redeemed us. Under a ſenſe therefore of God's
goodneſs to us, let us behave kindly to each other. Let us be
humble-minded—open to conviction—and particularly careful not
20. to mix heat, and animoſity with our religious differences. The
paſſionate advocate never advances the cauſe of religion. Lay aſide
21. therefore every degree of bitterneſs. That holy goſpel, which is
to ſave your ſouls, can be received only in the ſpirit of meekneſs.
22. Remember, that religion does not conſiſt in hearing the truth; but in
23. 24. practiſing it. Every thing elſe is ſelf-deceit. The goſpel is the
great rule of life, and manners; and he, who does not uſe it as ſuch,
is like a man, who looks merely in a glaſs for curioſity; but leaves
it inſtantly, without examining what defects in his appearance he
25. ſhould rectify. He only can receive any advantage from the goſpel,
26. who examines it ſo as to govern himſelf by it's precepts. Nor muſt
27. he conſider his religion as ſincere; if it lead him into uncharitable

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13. God's being the author of evil, has been an apology for wickedneſs, we ſee, ever ſince the eſtabliſhment of chriſtianity.

and

and bitter language, inſtead of thoſe benevolent actions, and that heavenly converſation, in which religion ſo much conſiſts.

CHAP. II.

Beſides the animoſities, which I fear may prevail among you, I muſt take notice of another thing, which is exceedingly wrong; and that is your partiality to people in higher ſtations. If dreſs influence you on one hand; or mean apparel, on the other; you certainly guide your deciſions by a very unchriſtian rule. Conſider, my brethren, how your almighty Father acts. Doth he make any difference between the poor, and the rich? Are they not all equal heirs of his promiſes? Yet theſe poor you have deſpiſed; notwithſtanding the rich are they, who chiefly oppreſs you—and prophane that holy Name, which you revere. That moſt excellent rule of your religion, to *love your neighbour as yourſelf*, teaches you a different practice; and ſtrongly oppoſes all this unjuſt partiality. For there is ſuch a connection between all the duties of religion; that he who lives in the known breach of one, would break any of the reſt, if he were under the ſame temptation. The general precept of loving our neighbour, equally injoins every duty to him. He therefore who is guilty of one offence againſt his neighbour, would as readily be guilty of another. But let me hope, that you regulate your actions, not by Jewiſh prejudices, which make exceptions to perſons; but by that equal law of chriſtianity, which preſcribes univerſal

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12.

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4. It is not eaſy to ſay, in what manner the apoſtle ſuppoſes this partiality to have wrought: but it is probable he means in their *judicial deciſions*. The word *ſynagogue*, in the original, (ver. 2) rather means *here a court of juſtice*, than an aſſembly met to worſhip God. Impartiality is the characteriſtic of the one, and devotion of the other. The Talmudiſts expreſsly ſay, that if a poor man, and a rich man plead together, they muſt both either ſit, or ſtand. Beza ſays, that the expreſſion, which we tranſlate, *judges of evil thoughts*, is a Hebraiſm; and therefore he tranſlates it, judices, male ratiocinantes—*judges who reaſon ill.*

11. Some tranſlate ὁ, *he*; and refer it to the *lawgiver*. Others tranſlate it *it*; and refer it to the *royal law*. Both ſenſes are good.

13. love. The unmerciful, and malicious man, you know, by the whole tenor of the gospel, is laying up for himself future mischief: while mercy to man, will certainly meet a return of mercy from God.

14. Nay farther, be assured, that without works of charity, even the great christian principle of faith is of no avail. Can faith alone, do you suppose, save you? See how it appears in common life. A
15. 16. person in distress presents himself to you. You tell him you are fully convinced of his unhappy condition; and heartily wish him relief. But if your belief of his distress carry you no farther than
17. good wishes, is it of any advantage? Just in the same way, faith, unaccompanied by good works, signifies nothing. And it is an
18. undoubted truth, that there is no way of shewing the soundness of
19. your faith, but by the purity of your lives.——Nor is this any new doctrine. Faith, under the Jewish religion, had just the same tendency, as under the christian. If the Jew merely believed in God, he did no more, than the devils do; who believe and tremble.
20. Such a faith, unaccompanied by works, was dead. Was not
21. Abraham's faith evidenced by works, when he offered up Isaac on
22. the altar? Was it not this mode of faith, which shewed his
23. sincerity? Was it not through this, he was justified? And was it not this, which gained him the honourable title of the Friend of
24. God? You see then that by works a man is justified; and not by
25. faith only.——The case of Rahab was the same. If she had professed

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23. Gen. xv. 6. 2 Chron. xx. 7. Isa. xli. 8.

23. It is remarkable, that St. Paul quotes this very text (Romans iv. 3.) to prove that Abraham was *justified by faith*; which St. James produces to shew, *that he was justified by works, and not by faith only.*

25. This is the third time, in which *Rahab the harlot* is mentioned in the New Testament. The reason why she is thus particularized (for the apostle might have found many other instances of faith,) may be first to shew the eminence of *her faith*, which distinguished itself in believing

profeſſed her faith only in God, it had been nothing; but ſhe ſhewed the ſincerity of it by her works—by receiving, and diſmiſſing the ſpies. Thus as the body without the ſoul is dead; ſo the Jewiſh 26.
faith formerly, and the chriſtian faith now, are dead alſo; unleſs actuated by that inlivening Spirit, which draws faith into action.

CHAP. III.

If then profeſſing your faith alone, be not ſufficient to make a chriſtian, you may be aſſured, it is much leſs ſo, to make a 1.
teacher. Let a man be careful therefore in taking upon himſelf this office. By miſleading others he contracts double guilt. We 2.
have all our failings; but the religious chriſtian is ſo far from abuſing the uſe of ſpeech by indiſcrete teaching, that he is careful even in his common converſation. A ſtrict care over his words, he knows, is one of the beſt preſervatives againſt ſin. He, who can govern his tongue, may be ſaid to govern his life; juſt as the 3.
bit guides the horſe; and the helm, the ſhip. Tho the tongue is 4. 5.
a ſmall inſtrument, it's power is great. How miſchievous a flame is often raiſed by a ſpark? Such a ſpark is the tongue. It is kindled 6.

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believing in the true God, amidſt a nation of idolaters. Secondly, becauſe David, as is commonly underſtood, was deſcended from her, and afterwards Chriſt.—Many interpreters however do not allow that ſhe ought to be ſtigmatized by the name of *harlot*; but find the word, which is ſo tranſlated, may mean a perſon *who took hire for the entertainment of gueſts at her houſe*. The Jewiſh ſpies therefore applied to her merely for lodging.

1. The Jewiſh zealots greatly affected the office of teachers.—St. Paul, in his epiſtle to Timothy (1 Tim. i. 7.) rebukes theſe forward teachers: and again, in Romans (ii. 19). St. James uſes the ſame language here.

2. The word πλαιομεν properly ſignifies *we trip*. The general courſe of our life, ſays Dr. Barrow, is called in ſcripture *a way*: the particular paſſages of it, *ſteps*: a regular courſe of right acting, *walking uprightly*: and when we act amiſs, (πλαιομεν) *we trip*.

6. The tongue, ſays the text, is ο κοσμος της αδικιας; which we tranſlate, *a world of iniquity*. Elſner (in loc.) gives this expreſſion, a ſingular, and ingenious turn; the tongue, ſays he, *is the adorning of unrighteouſneſs*: alluding to the many gloſſes, and excuſes it is apt to make for wickedneſs. But I think this interpretation more ingenious, than juſt.

7. 8. in hell; and ſets fire to the world. Full of deadly poiſon, it is more pernicious than ſerpents—more furious, than the fierceſt wild beaſt.
9. 10. How ſhocking is it to conſider, that that tongue, which was given us
11. to bleſs God, is employed in curſing our fellow-creatures. Such contradictions appear in no part of the creation, but in man. We never ſee the fountain produce ſweet water, and bitter; nor the
12. 13. tree bear different kinds of fruit. Whoever therefore among you, pretends to real wiſdom, let him ſhew it in a reſtrained, gentle,
14. and holy converſation; aſſuring himſelf, that where ſtrife, and emulation prevail, there may be boaſting of wiſdom; but it is
15. certainly of that kind, which ſprings from worldly, and ſenſual
16. motives: it's fruit is miſchief, and confuſion. Whereas heavenly
17. wiſdom is pure, and gentle, and open to conviction; and leads to all that holineſs, which poſſeſſes the mind of every peaceable man.

CHAP. IV. And here, my brethren, let me remind you of that calamitous
1. ſtate, to which your nation is now reduced by your ſeditions, and quarrels. Thoſe bad paſſions, which miſlead your tongues, miſlead
2. 3. alſo your actions. Your whole lives are given up to temporal views; which lead you to violence, and miſchief: and tho you ſtill preſerve an outward form of worſhip; yet your petitions being wholly void
4. of true devotion, are unacceptable to God. You apoſtates from the truth! know you not that he, who is the friend of the world, is
5. the enemy of God? In vain you ſearch the ſcriptures. The Spirit
6. of truth can never dwell in an envious heart. The grace of God

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7. Δαμαζεται might more properly be rendered *ſubdued*, than *tamed*. All kinds of animals have certainly been ſubdued by man; but cannot well be ſaid to have been *tamed*, or *reclaimed*.

2. Bowyer conjectures, that φονευετε ſhould be read φθονειτε; *you envy*.

6. This epiſtle is ſuppoſed to have been written about the year ſixty-two; when the wild, and frantic madneſs of the Jews, in various places, was drawing upon them apace thoſe dreadful calamities, which ſoon overwhelmed them. This part of the epiſtle therefore, of courſe, muſt be conſidered as addreſſed to the unbelieving part of the Jewiſh nation.

resists the proud; but flows in full measure upon the humble.——
Lay aside then all worldly-mindedness: resist the devil: turn truly 7. 8. 9. 10
to God: humble yourselves before him: wash away your sins by repentance: and God will open to you the gates of mercy.

And now, my brethren in Christ, let me next address myself 11.
to *you*. Tho you have accepted the grace of God; yet be not harsh in condemning those, who are not so happy. This is making yourselves judges of God's laws; instead of being humble observers of them. Do you pretend to issue that sentence, which can come 12.
only from the great Lawgiver himself? Look nearer home. I find 13.
even among *you* too much of this worldly spirit. You depend, in your worldly schemes, too much on yourselves, and on your own prudence; not considering the uncertainty of all human things; 14.
which points out to you the necessity of depending on God. This 15. 16.
is a kind of confidence, my brethren, which springs from an evil 17.
root: and in you, who know better, it is certainly so much worse. CHAP. V.
You will soon be spectators of that misery, and distress, which is
coming upon the powerful leaders of the Jews. What will be the 1. 2. 3.
end of all their wealth? They have hoarded it up as an increase of their distress at this time. Their frauds, and injustice will then 4.
rise against them. The cry of their iniquities will reach to heaven; and of those pleasurable lives, which have been spent as in a heathen 5.
riot on a day of sacrifice. But, above all, for their having put to 6.
death the Messiah, are they chiefly punished with this dreadful calamity.

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11. The resuming the address here *to christians* is not directly specified, yet it seems to be understood; and so it is interpreted by the best commentators.

3. The *last days* is one of the evangelical expressions to denote the dissolution of the Jewish government, on the establishment of christianity.

5. Some interpreters suppose the apostle here means their surfeiting themselves with pleasure, as beasts were fatted for sacrifice.

Be

7. Be you however, my brethren, (perſecuted and diſtreſſed as you
are,) patient, and reſigned; waiting for that happy time, which
will finiſh all your afflictions. See with what labour the huſbandman
8. toils through the year, in expectation of his harveſt. And ſhall
not you live in patient hope of that happineſs which is to laſt
through all eternity? Strengthen your faith then with this great
9. view of the glory of God. Lay aſide all reſentment againſt your
perſecutors (which in every light is irreligious) and leave them in
10. 11. the hands of almighty juſtice. Take the prophets as examples
of ſuffering. Read the account of that holy ſufferer Job. There
ſee the goodneſs of the Lord in all the diſtreſſes of his patient
ſervants; and how graciouſly he reaches out his hand to ſuſtain
12. them.——As I exhort you thus to lay aſide all perſecuting thoughts,
let me exhort you alſo to lay aſide that common Jewiſh practice
of ſwearing. Swearing in common converſation, either by God,
or any of his creatures, is utterly forbidden by chriſtianity.

13. Finally, my brethren, turn every circumſtance of life to your
14. 15. 16. ſpiritual advantage. Are any among you in diſtreſs? Let them
pray

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6. 7. The addreſs likewiſe in this chapter ſeems to be made to two different ſorts of people —hardened Jews—and Jewiſh converts. In the 6th verſe they ſeem to be taxed with the death of Chriſt—in the 7th they are addreſſed as perſons, who ought to be patient unto the coming of the Lord.——The expreſſion, *And he doth not reſiſt you*, is commonly underſtood interrogatively; and may therefore be rendered, as I have explained it.—Some however are inclined to believe, from the internal evidence of this epiſtle, that it was addreſſed only to thoſe Jews, who profeſſed chriſtianity. Had the apoſtle written to unbelieving Jews, he would have endeavoured, one ſhould think, to perſuade them to embrace the chriſtian faith. He would have teſtified the reſurrection of Chriſt; and brought arguments from the prophets to convince them that he was the Meſſiah. But nothing of this appears. His deſign ſeems only to build up thoſe in the chriſtian practice, who had already embraced the chriſtian faith.— I leave theſe arguments to the reader's judgment.

15. The perſons here mentioned are ſuch as (1 Cor. xi. 30) had drawn upon themſelves God's diſpleaſure for their ſins. Theſe were viſitations known in the early ages of the church. We read, that death, in ſome caſes, was inflicted; and St. Paul ſometimes threatens his backſliding

pray to God. Are they happy? Let them praiſe him. Are they under God's correcting hand for their ſins? Let them ſend for the elders of the church, who receiving their confeſſion, and reſolutions of obedience, will pray over them: and the prayers of the faithful ſhall raiſe them again to health; and their ſins ſhall be forgiven. Prayer is our moſt effectual intercourſe with God. On 17.
the prayers of Elijah, who was a mere man like us, the heavens were ſhut up; and rain fell not for more than three years. On 18.
his praying again, the rains fell; and the earth produced fruit.

ſliding converts; that he will *viſit them with a rod.*——Such caſes however muſt not be drawn into modern example. The elders of the church may ſtill, and ought ſtill to pray with ſick people: but we have no authority to ſuppoſe the prayer of faith will reſtore them to health.—I know no greater ſource of fanaticiſm, than the application of apoſtolic powers to modern times.——As to the *anointing with oil* here mentioned, it was certainly practiſed in the ancient church. We read of it again in Mark (vi. 13). But the ſtreſs is not laid on the *oil*; but on the *prayer of faith*. Our Saviour in many of his miracles, uſed *external ſigns*; and for the ſame reaſon *anointing* might be uſed, which was cuſtomary among the Jews. Be it however as it may, there is a great difference between anointing a ſick perſon, in order *to his recovery*; and anointing him profeſſedly *when he is dying*, as a mean of ſanctification. See a note on Mark vi. 13.

16. *The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* This paſſage the papiſt thinks very authoritative with regard to the worſhip of ſaints. He argues, a fortiori, that if the prayers of a good man avail much; the prayers of a ſaint, or an angel, muſt avail more.—But he ought to conſider, that altho the prayers, and interceſſions of a *good man* are allowed, and indeed injoined; all prayers to angels are totally forbidden (ſee Col. ii. 18.) and the reaſon is obvious; we cannot pray to a ſaint, or angel, without aſcribing to him the prerogative of God, in hearing our prayers, which in fact, makes an act of prayer an act of idolatry. We requeſt *the prayers of men* on no ſuch reaſons. We do not pray *to* men; but *for* them. God may have injoined prayer for our fellow-creatures for our own ſakes. It certainly tends greatly to meliorate the heart; and, in the apoſtle's language, to *provoke unto love, and good works*. Heb. x. 24.—*Effectual* prayer *availeth much*, as in our tranſlation, is a contradiction. Ενεργουμενη, means rather *energetic*.

17. The caſe of Elijah, here alluded to, ſeems to be this. He feared, from God's threatnings againſt idolatry, that the whole land ſhould be deſtroyed; and therefore he prayed for a drought, in order to bring the people to repentance by a ſlighter puniſhment. The apoſtle's inference is, that the ſlighter puniſhment of ſickneſs was intended to ſave the *ſoul from death*.

Among

19. 20. Among all the works of charity, that of ſaving a ſoul from death; and covering up, as it were, the iniquities of a ſinner, is the moſt pleaſing to God.

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19. 20. Theſe two laſt verſes are connected with the 16th. We are there directed to endeavour the recovery of a ſinner; and here we find, how acceptable a work it is to God.

END OF THE EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES.

PREFACE

TO THE

FIRST, AND SECOND EPISTLES OF ST. PETER.

ST. PETER is ſuppoſed to have lived chiefly in Judea; tho he carried the goſpel into ſeveral parts of Greece. He viſited Rome alſo, where he is ſaid to have ſuffered martyrdom under the emperor Nero. From hence both his epiſtles ſeem to have been written, a little before his death; to which he alludes, as an event at hand *. They may be conſidered therefore as an affectionate legacy; and were, no doubt, conſidered as ſuch by the converts, to whom they were addreſſed; tho ſome doubt hath ariſen, who theſe converts were. Many interpreters have conceived his epiſtles to have been written to Jewiſh chriſtians: others again have thought they were written only to Gentiles. Dr. Lardner hath examined both ſides with great accuracy; and concludes, they were written to *all* chriſtian converts; but *chiefly* addreſſed to thoſe of Gentile extraction.

In his firſt epiſtle St. Peter exhorts his chriſtian readers to perſevere in their religious principles on various motives. He inculcates univerſal love—purity of life—obedience to government—the obſervance

* II. Pet. i. 14.

 of

of relative duties—and chriſtian gentleneſs in all ſituations, even in that of ſuffering. He laſtly addreſſes the miniſters of the goſpel; and concludes with ſome general inſtructions.

The ſecond epiſtle begins as the firſt, with exhortations to perſeverance in holineſs. The apoſtle then warns his hearers againſt falſe prophets, and deceivers—reminds them of God's judgments; and concludes with exhortations to true religion from a view of eternity.

FIRST GENERAL EPISTLE

OF

ST. PETER.

CHAP. I.

PETER, an apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, to all the chriſtian converts, ſcattered through different parts of Aſia; who having embraced the goſpel, lead lives anſwerable to it, and hope for ſalvation through the death of Chriſt—grace and peace be multiplied unto you! 1. 2.

Bleſſed be God evermore, who hath raiſed us, by the reſurrection of Chriſt, to the hope of an eternal inheritance; which is 3. 4. 5.

2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God.* On this paſſage the doctrine of predeſtination to future happineſs, greatly depends. But, I think, it receives little ſupport from it. If we join this verſe to the preceding one, from which it is ſeparated only by a comma, we find that all the chriſtians of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, &c. are the *elect*. But nothing can be more abſurd than to ſuppoſe ſo large a body of people were all in a ſtate of ſalvation: ſo that nothing can be collected from the paſſage, but that the Gentiles were pointed out by *prophecy*, or the *foreknowledge of God*, to be ingrafted into the chriſtian church.

5. *Kept through faith*, ſays our tranſlation: but the original (δια πιστεως) may rather perhaps ſignify, *during faith*. The prepoſition δια has various ſignifications; and, I believe, among others, may admit this. As δια νομου during the time of the law. Rom. iv. 13. Δια του σωματος during our abode in the body. 2 Cor. v. 10. The original word φρουρουμενους is very ſtrong; as if the faithful in Chriſt were preſerved, as in an impregnable garriſon.

6. reſerved for us, if we perſevere in our faith. This hope ought to
be the ſource of all your happineſs; tho it may, during this life,
7. engage you in trials, and afflictions. Theſe, as a furnace tries gold,
will purify your faith more and more; and draw you to Chriſt.
8. 9. And tho you were never bleſſed with a ſight of your Saviour, as
many of your fellow-chriſtians have been; yet you have evidence
ſufficient to believe on him—and to rejoice in the hope of that
10. 11. ſalvation, which is the end of your faith. The evidence indeed of
all the holy prophets is ſufficient; who, through the Spirit of God,
foreſaw theſe things; and teſtified of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and
12. of his glorious ſtate, that ſhould follow. Their teſtimony agreed,
that this great revelation ſhould not take place in their days: they
only predicted, what ſhould afterwards be preached under the in-
fluence of the Holy Spirit—that great diſpenſation of God, which
even the angels examine with aſtoniſhment.

13. Let theſe thoughts therefore keep you firm in your profeſſion;
14. 15. 16. and in the holy expectation of the laſt great day. Utterly deteſting
thoſe abominable impurities, in which you once lived; become
the obedient children of God: and let his purity be your pattern,
17. as you are directed in ſcripture. You are aſſured, that God is no
reſpecter of perſons; but judgeth every man according to his work.
Live therefore in a conſtant courſe of watchfulneſs, and apprehen-
ſion of danger.

18. 19. As an inducement to you to add your own utmoſt endeavours
to God's kindneſs, conſider how precious your ſouls are in his
ſight. You have been redeemed, not with the corruptible things
20. of this world, ſilver, and gold; but with the blood of Chriſt.

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11. The Spirit which inſpired the prophets, is here called the Spirit of Chriſt.

12. The angels deſiring to look into the myſteries of chriſtianity hath been thought by ſome to allude to the poſture of the cherubims over the mercy-ſeat.

16. See Levit. xi. 44—xix. 2—xx. 7, 26.

And

And this redemption was pre-ordained from the foundation of the 21.
world; tho it is opened only to us at this time. Let it therefore
excite in you a truſt in that God, who by raiſing up Chriſt from
the dead, gave you the ſtrongeſt foundation for faith and hope.

Since then you have given yourſelves up to the profeſſion of this 22.
holy religion, ſhew it in the performance of that great duty, in
which it particularly engages you, the univerſal love of mankind;
conſidering yourſelves now not of an earthly lineage; but as born 23.
of God, through Chriſt. Every thing human, as well as all the 24.
productions of nature, are ſubject to decay: but the religion of 25.
the goſpel is that holy diſpenſation, which the prophet deſcribes CHAP. II.
as enduring for ever. Conſidering yourſelves therefore as born anew 1. 2. 3.
into this holy religion, lay aſide all malice, and guile, and hypo-
criſy, and evil-ſpeaking; and like children fed on ſimple diet, re-
ceive in your hearts the pure principles of the goſpel; and taſte
the grace of God. Let all your worldly prejudices be diſpelled. 4. 5.
Conſider yourſelves as forming a part of a nobler temple, than that
of the Jews; and in which a much more ſpiritual ſacrifice is offered
to God through Chriſt. This is agreeable to the prophecy of 6.
Iſaiah; *Behold I lay in Sion a corner-ſtone; and whatever reſts on*
it, ſhall be firmly eſtabliſhed.——Thus the Meſſiah is characterized 7.
to the true believer. But to the unbelieving Jew, he is held out
by one prophet, tho the head-ſtone in the corner, uniting Jew,
and Gentile in one building, *yet diſallowed by the builders:* and by
another prophet he is repreſented as a *ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock* 8.

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25. See Iſa. xl. 6, 7, 8.

6. Iſa. xxviii. 16.

7. Pſalm cxviii. 22.

8. Iſa. viii. 14.—The expreſſion, *whereunto they were appointed,* is much the ſame, as that in Acts xiii. 48, *ordained to eternal life.* Thoſe were appointed to deſtruction, becauſe of their wickedneſs: and theſe were ordained to ſalvation, becauſe of their obedience.

of

of offence to thoſe, who being wilfully diſobedient, draw upon them-
9. ſelves that puniſhment, which God hath appointed. But you, who have embraced the goſpel, are conſidered by God as the inheritors of all thoſe holy bleſſings, which were promiſed to the Jews. You now diſplay more eminently the glory of God in being drawn from
10. darkneſs to light, than the Jews anciently did. Tho you were before conſidered as a race, not deſerving notice; you are now received more fully into the favour, and mercies of God, than they ever were.

11. Fully impreſſed then, my brethren, with theſe high ideas of the dignity of your heavenly calling, conſider yourſelves only as paſſengers through this world; and abſtain from all it's guilty pleaſures,
12. which debaſe, and corrupt the ſoul. Among your Gentile neighbours let your conduct be particularly guarded. Tho they conſider you now as ill-diſpoſed people; they may begin to admire your innocent and pious behaviour; and may at length be led to ſerious thought, in ſome alarming day of viſitation.

13. 14. Submit peaceably to whatever government you live under; and to every department of it. And let this be done in obedience to
15. the will of God. This alſo is the moſt effectual way of ſilencing
16. the prejudices, and ignorance of your adverſaries. You are free in one ſenſe indeed: but you muſt not conſider your freedom, as a privilege againſt the rights of government; but merely in a ſpiritual

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9. Exod. xix. 5, 6.

13. Ideas had gotten abroad, that the chriſtian religion was a kind of manumiſſion from all government: eſpecially among the Jewiſh chriſtians; who added their national prejudices to theſe opinions.

14. *Unto governors, as unto them, that are ſent by him.* Here is a plain deſignation of the governors of provinces, *ſent by* the Roman emperors.

15. St. Peter's language is ſometimes very ſtrong. The word φιμοῦν, which is here rendered *put to ſilence*; properly ſignifies *to muzzle*; which in one expreſſive word ſhews the apoſtle's opinion of theſe adverſaries of chriſtianity.

ſenſe

ſenſe. In the mean time, pay ſuch reſpect to the ſeveral orders of 17.
men, as is due to them. Shew an affectionate regard to each other, from whatever ſtock you become chriſtians. Adhere firmly to your religion, and perform all the duties of good citizens.

In private life, let the ſame rules be obſerved. The ſlave, who 18.
becomes a chriſtian, is ſtill a ſlave. His religion muſt enable him to ſubmit even to an imperious maſter. If a man ſuffer patiently 19. 20.
for an offence, he deſerves little praiſe. But when he bears, with reſignation to God, unjuſt uſage, God will not fail to accept his patient ſufferings. Remember always, as the pattern of your imita- 21.
tion, the great example of your bleſſed Saviour; who tho innocent 22. 23.
himſelf, bore all the reproaches, and cruelty of his perſecutors with holy ſubmiſſion to God. He bore even the puniſhment of the 24.
croſs, for the ſins of mankind. In ſhort, you ſhould conſider your- 25.
ſelves as having formerly been ſheep going aſtray; but as now brought to the fold of Chriſt.

CHAP. III.

The ſame rule obtains alſo between man and wife. Religion makes no change in this union. If a chriſtian woman be married 1. 2.
to a heathen; let her ſtill obſerve the duties of her ſtation. Her mild, and modeſt behaviour may perhaps bring over her unbelieving 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.
huſband. But let her truſt to the ornament of her mind; not of her dreſs. Like the holy women of old, like Sarah, and others, who lived in patriarchal times, let her behave with mild ſubmiſſion to her huſband; and fill her ſtation, however difficult, with meekneſs, and conſtancy.——Let the huſband alſo treat the wife with gentleneſs, and kindneſs; and conſider her, tho a heathen, as an heir of the ſame promiſe; with whom he may hereafter be able to unite in the ſame worſhip.

In concluſion, my brethren, ſhew every degree of kindneſs to 8.
each other; and bleſs your perſecutors, however ill they uſe you. 9.

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1. Ανευ λογου—*without preaching*—merely by *her example*.

Such

Such a diſpoſition will change the curſe of an enemy into the
10. 11. 12. bleſſing of God. Even in a temporal way this gentleneſs has it's effect. You may conſider the prophet's words, as declaring the happineſs both of this world, and the next. *He that loveth life, and would ſee good days; let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips, that they ſpeak no guile. Let him leave off evil, and do good: let him ſeek peace with his utmoſt endeavour. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous; and his ears are open to their prayers: but the face of the Lord is againſt them that do evil.*

13. A chriſtian behaviour is certainly the beſt means of preſerving
14. you from the evils of this world: and if you happen to fall into them; eſpecially if you are perſecuted for your religion, it is the beſt means of ſupporting you under them. The chriſtian ſufferer even finds matter of joy in his ſufferings. Be not afraid then of
15. any of the evils, which this world can bring upon you. Devote yourſelves to God; and he will aſſiſt you in giving an anſwer to all, who demand a reaſon of your faith: but let that anſwer always be given in the ſpirit of meekneſs to man; and of reverence to
16. God.——Under the influence of a good conſcience therefore, it
17. may be hoped, you will ſilence the accuſations of your perſecutors. But if it be the will of God, that you ſhould ſuffer, you will have
18. the comfort of ſuffering with innocence; after the example of our bleſſed Saviour; who laid down his life for the ſins of others;
19. 20. and was afterwards raiſed, as you alſo ſhall be, to everlaſting glory. That ſame Spirit, which warned the ancient world, in the days
21. of Noah, to eſcape the threatened evil, offers ſalvation to you through baptiſm, of which the ark is a kind of type; holding out

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19. Wicked perſons are often repreſented by Iſaiah, and other ſacred writers, under the idea of priſoners. I have endeavoured, as much as I could, in this difficult paſſage, to give what appears to me the *connection*, and *ſcope* of the apoſtle's argument.

20. Saved *by water*; δι ὑδατος, *carried ſafely through the water*.

the

the aſſurance of that ſalvation through the reſurrection of Chriſt; who is now aſcended into heaven, and ſeated in infinite glory. 22.

Learn then to ſuffer after the example of Chriſt; and let this mortified ſpirit lead you from all the ſinful gratifications of life; and make you feel, that there is no true enjoyment, but in obedience to the will of God. Long have you Gentile chriſtians lived in the practices of a wicked world. It is now high time to renounce them all; and to ſet againſt the reproaches of worldly men, the awful reflection, that we muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt. The goſpel was preached to you Gentiles for this reaſon, that however you may be judged by worldly men; your ſouls may be raiſed hereafter in the day of Chriſt. Let this great conſideration therefore ſink deep within you, that the end of all things is at hand. Let it urge you to be ſerious, devout, and charitable. Charity covers both your own ſins, and the ſins of others. Communicate with each other the things of this world. Communicate alſo your ſpiritual gifts, as good ſtewards of the different graces of God: and whether you expound in the church, or miniſter, or perform any other office, conſult only the glory of God through Chriſt; to whom be honour and praiſe for ever, and ever, Amen!

CHAP. IV. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11.

Once more, my brethren, let me beſeech you not to be diſheartened by the perſecutions, which await you: but rather rejoice, 12. 13. 14.

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6. I find no interpretation, which, I think, reconciles this difficult paſſage with the context, ſo well as this.

7. Some interpreters refer the end of all things, to the concluſion of the Jewiſh ſtate. I think the concluſion of the Jewiſh ſtate has little to do with the preſent argument. Tho the end of all things might not literally be at hand: yet every man's death is the end of all things to him. Our Saviour ſpeaks the ſame language. Matt. xxiv. 26.

8. *Fervent charity*, ſays the text: αγαπη εκτενες in the original; *continued, uninterrupted charity* —that embraces all mankind—and not in a deſultory, but in a uniform manner. It covers the faults of others, by bearing, forbearing, and forgiving. It covers our own, through that forgiveneſs, which God has promiſed to thoſe, who forgive others; and alſo becauſe charity, being the fulfilling of the law, leads directly to a life of holineſs.

that as you are partakers of Chriſt's ſufferings, you ſhall alſo be
15. partakers of his glory.—In the mean time, it is as reproachable
16. for a chriſtian to ſuffer as an offender; as it is glorious for him to
17. 18. ſuffer for his religion.—Thus amidſt the general ruin, which is
coming upon theſe wicked times, the chriſtian ſhall have his ſhare.
But his afflictions will be light, in compariſon of that great over-
19. throw, which ſhall deſtroy the Jewiſh nation. Let him therefore,
conſcious of his own innocence, and the goodneſs of his cauſe,
commit himſelf, in all his diſtreſſes to God, his faithful preſerver.

CHAP. V. 1. 2. To theſe general inſtructions, let me add a particular one to
the elders of the ſeveral churches; whom, with the authority of
an apoſtle, and a witneſs of the ſufferings of Chriſt, I exhort to
attend diligently to their reſpective charges, with that ready, diſ-
intereſted mind, which ſhews them to be under no conſtraint.
3. Among other things, let them avoid a haughty, imperious behaviour.
4. Let them rather inſtruct their flock by an example of meekneſs, and
piety; that when the great Shepherd ſhall appear, he may approve
5. their conduct. Let the younger pay a deference to the elder. Let
a general humility take place among you; for pride is one of thoſe
vices, which are moſt offenſive to God; and humility one of thoſe
virtues, which are moſt pleaſing in his ſight.

6. If then you are to ſhew humility to man; you ought more eſpeci-
ally to humble yourſelves in the ſight of God, who never rewards
7. ſelf-exaltation. On him throw all your cares. He is your true
8. friend, and only ſupport, in all your diſtreſſes.

In fine, be conſtantly on your guard. The wiles of the devil
9. ſurround you on every ſide. Let your faith ſupport you. At the
ſame time, remember that your trials are not greater, than thoſe
10. of your brethren in different parts of the world.—May the God of
all grace who hath opened to us an eternity of glory, confirm your
faith

faith through your ſufferings for Chriſt; to whom be aſcribed all 11.
praiſe, and dominion for ever. Amen!

This ſhort letter, my brethren, intended to ſtrengthen you, in 12.
your profeſſion, I ſend by Silas, a ſincere profeſſor of the faith.— 13.
The church of Babylon, which unites in the ſame faith with you,
unites alſo in this ſalutation.——Remember always to exerciſe among 14.
each other every office of charity; and may the peace of God reſide
ever among you. Amen!

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13. Moſt commentators ſuppoſe the apoſtle calls Rome by the name of Babylon; as it cannot be imagined he could mean the real city of that name.

END OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER.

SECOND GENERAL EPISTLE

OF

ST. PETER.

SIMON Peter, an apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, to all, who through the goodneſs of God, are partakers with us, of the bleſſings of the goſpel—grace, and peace be multiplied, through the knowledge of God, and of his glorious promiſes in Jeſus Chriſt! CHAP. I. 1. 2.

This holy religion fully opens to you the means of attaining everlaſting happineſs; and the completion of thoſe great promiſes; which, after you have purified yourſelves from the corruptions of the world, will make you partakers of a divine nature.—Endeavour therefore 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

1. The beginning of this epiſtle, conveys much the ſame meaning, as the beginning of the firſt; and may be a comment upon it.

4. Not *the* divine nature, as our tranſlation has it.

5. Theſe verſes are generally explained thus. Add to your *faith*, *courage* in profeſſing it. To this add a diſtinct *knowledge of all it's principles*. To this add temperance, or the *government of your paſſions*; and to temperance, patience, or *reſignation in your diſtreſſes*. To patience add godlineſs, or the *ſincere worſhip of God*. To godlineſs, *kindneſs to all your near connections*; and to kindneſs add a *general benevolence to all mankind*.——But if we examine this catalogue of graces, and virtues, it does not, I think, appear, that they run in any regular ſeries. The duties to God, and man, are intermixed without any attention to exact order.——All I mean to infer, is, that the ſacred writers are above the logical forms of human compoſition—and that the apoſtle juſt marked thoſe virtues, which we ought moſt to aſpire after; but did not mean a regular dependent ſeries of them.

with

with all your care to attain thefe bleffings of religion, adding to your faith, every virtue to God, your neighbour, and yourfelves. This
8. holy practice alone will fhew the proficiency you have made in the
9. knowledge of the gofpel. He, who is deficient here, fhews plainly,
10. that he is not in a ftate of grace. As you are now therefore, by the goodnefs of God, members of this holy religion; fee that you
11. perfevere in the practice of all chriftian duties; which will infure
12. 13. you a bleffed refurrection in the kingdom of Chrift.——While I am with you, I cannot but remind you of thefe things; tho you are
14. fo well acquainted with them. I am affured, from what our bleffed Lord formerly told me, that I fhall foon be taken from you; and
15. I could wifh to leave on your memory, the importance of thefe
16. things. Your faith in Chrift, as the great Saviour of the world, does not reft on fable, and invention; but on the teftimony
17. 18. of eye-witneffes. I am particularly enabled to teftify this great truth, having been admitted to that glorious vifion on the mount, when Chrift was declared, by a voice from heaven, to be the Son of
19. God. But you have the moft convincing proof of this truth from prophecy, which you will do well to confider as what above all other things tends to throw the light of truth upon your minds;
20. 21. knowing that no prophecy is of private interpretation, or of human

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14. See John xxi. 18, 19.

17. 18. See Matt. xvii. 1—Mark ix. 2, 3. Luke ix. 28.

19. It has always given me peculiar pleafure to read St. Peter's encomium on prophecy; as prophecy is the moft convincing evidence of the truth of our religion. Bp. Burnet gives a remarkable inftance of it's force in the converfion of that celebrated penitent, the Earl of Rochefter; who was ftruck with nothing fo much, as the comparifon of Chrift's death with the liiid chapter of Ifaiah.—Thefe words however, tho they appear very plain; have given occafion to much difpute. See Bowyer's conjectures.

20. The expreffion, *private interpretation* fhould, I think, check much of that readinefs, with which many have applied the prophetic writings to the events of hiftory. Many of thefe events have little relation to Chrift's kingdom; to which all prophecy, in fome fhape, or other, feems intended to point.

origin;

origin; but that all the prophetic writings were dictated to holy men, for great purposes, by the Spirit of God. CHAP. II.

But as there were false prophets under the law, so shall there be false teachers under the gospel; who shall introduce vile heresies, denying even the Lord, who bought them; and shall draw upon themselves a sudden ruin. They shall influence many; and deceive them through interested views; and bring great slander on the truth; till their destruction, which is advancing apace, shall suddenly overwhelm them. 1. 2. 3

Nor is this destruction, which is coming upon the Jews, an extraordinary instance of God's justice. Against enormous wickedness he hath often executed severe judgments. The angels, that sinned, were driven from the presence of God. The old world was destroyed by a flood: and Sodom, and Gomorrha by fire. But from the former of these calamities, Noah, who had endeavoured to convert his unrighteous neighbours, was exempted: and from the latter Lot was delivered, who had all along opposed the wickedness of the country, in which he dwelt. Thus mercy, and judgment are equally tempered in the hands of God.——But chiefly 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

1. *The Lord who bought them*, is commonly interpreted of God, rather than of Christ; as the word δεσποτης is never applied to Christ in the New Testament, and as the verse seems to allude to Deut. xxxii. 6; in which God is said to have *bought Israel*. But tho the words might *primarily have that meaning*, I think it more probable, that the apostle *applied* them to Christ.—By the *false teachers* who bring in *damnable heresies*, some suppose the apostle means the Nicolaitans, an abominable sect mentioned Revel. ii. 16. Church history informs us, that this sect was soon extinguished. See Mosheim vol. I. p. 116, and Dr. Whitby in locum. Whoever they were, they seem from many passages in this chapter, to have been christians—to have held heretical opinions, and to have propagated their tenets.—The *swift destruction* seems to correspond with the destruction of Jerusalem.

10. It is not easy to explain, whom the apostle means to point out in this and the following verses. Some suppose, he alludes to certain false opinions, which prevailed about heavenly beings. Others, (among whom is Dr. Lardner, see Cred. b. I. ch. VIII. p. 199) think, that some expressions in these verses allude to the riotous disposition of the Jews, which finally brought on their destruction. The chief difficulty lies in the confusion of the several ideas.

they

they, who give themſelves up to uncleanneſs, to pride, and blaſ-
11. 12. 13. phemy, provoke the judgments of God. So far are they from
14. imitating the mildneſs, and gentleneſs of heavenly beings, with which they profeſs to be ſo well acquainted; that, as if they were totally deprived even of human reaſon, they draw ruin upon themſelves by blaſphemouſly intruding into things they underſtand not—by the abominable impurity of their lives—and by their endeavours to lead others into the ſame wickedneſs, which they practiſe them-
15. ſelves. Like Balaam, they are continually corrupting ſuch as will
16. liſten to them, to promote unworthy ends of their own; unmoved
17. by the plaineſt appearances of God Almighty's diſpleaſure. Like dry ſprings, they have no iſſues of life. Like tempeſtuous clouds,
18. they are for ever involved in darkneſs. Through vanity, and ſenſual
19. allurements, it is their buſineſs to miſlead new converts. While they themſelves are ſlaves to their luſts, they promiſe liberty to others: tho no bondage can be ſo ſevere, as the bondage of vicious
20. 21. paſſions. Such a caſe as theirs, is, of all others, the moſt calamitous. To be again entangled in the pollutions of the world, after they had once known the truth, is certainly a much more
22. dangerous ſituation, than that of having never known it. It ſhews ſo innate a corruption of heart, that there is no farther hope of recovery.

CHAP. III. 1. 2. This is the ſecond epiſtle, my brethren, I have written to you, with a view chiefly to confirm your principles by drawing your

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15. In the Syriac verſion, it is Balaam the ſon of Beor. It is ſuppoſed that St. Peter writes Boſor for Beor in the Chaldee dialect.

22. The great difference of ſtyle between the iid chapter of St. Peter's ſecond epiſtle, and all the other parts both of that epiſtle, and the former, hath been obſerved by all critics. Bp. Sherlock (on Proph. Diſſ. 1) ſuppoſes, the apoſtle to have extracted theſe paſſages, at leaſt the ſenſe of them, from ſome Jewiſh writings then extant. And this appears the rather, from comparing this chapter with the epiſtle of St. Jude, which ſeems to have been taken from the ſame original.

attention

attention to the prophets, and to us the apoſtles of Chriſt. The 3.
impurities of the world will always make men enemies to religion:
and you will hear them forming their objections to the promiſes, 4.
and threatnings of the goſpel, merely becauſe they ſee things continuing in the ſame natural order, in which they have long continued; as if God had given no proofs even in the external world, 5. 6. 7.
of his power, and government; or, as if the deſtruction of the earth once by water, is not proof ſufficient of God's being able to deſtroy it a ſecond time by fire.——Be not you, my brethren, 8.
miſled by theſe tenets of infidelity. Time is nothing with the Almighty. Compared with eternity, a day, and a thouſand years are portions of equal value. Man judging according to his own 9.
confined ideas, attributes tardineſs to God; not conſidering, that he is merciful, and long-ſuffering, and deſirous, that all ſhould come to repentance. But notwithſtanding this long-ſuffering, when 10.
the day of the Lord does come, it will come ſuddenly, diſſolving at once all earthly connections.

Since then, my brethren, this ſhall be the great iſſue of things, 11.
what effect ſhould the conſideration of it have on us? What ſhould 12.
our converſation, and behaviour in this world be, when we reflect, how ſoon both we, and it ſhall be diſſolved? But the thoughts of 13.
theſe things give *us* no diſtreſs. *We* rely on God's gracious promiſe, that we ſhall be reſtored to a new and better world—the habitation of the righteous. As you live in conſtant hope therefore of this 14.
glorious change; take care always to be found in that holy ſtate, in which you ought to meet it; and conſider every moment of 15. 16.
delay

15. See Rom. ii. 4.—St. Peter, with great propriety, takes this opportunity of mentioning St. Paul; becauſe theſe two epiſtles were written to thoſe countries, where St. Paul had firſt preached; and to thoſe churches, which he had eſtabliſhed. St. Peter had ſeen, no doubt, St. Paul's epiſtles; and by mentioning his name, gives his ſanction to his doctrine. Tho

delay in the Almighty, as a new inſtance of his mercy to you. Thus alſo our beloved brother Paul hath inſtructed you; exhorting you to receive with holy gratitude, the long-ſuffering of God; conſidering that this goodneſs is intended to lead you to repentance. No doubt there is ſome difficulty in theſe things, on which I have been diſcourſing to you; and which they who are ill-diſpoſed to the goſpel pervert as they do other parts of ſcripture, to
17. their own deſtruction. Take care, my brethren, that you be not led away by theſe errors, of which I have given you ſufficient
18. warning: but continue to increaſe in every holy grace; and in the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt; to whom be glory both now, and for ever: Amen!

St. Paul had withſtood him to his face, and rebuked him openly (Gal. ii. 11) he had no animoſity on that head. Theſe two holy apoſtles might err; and might have different ſentiments: but as they both had one great end in view, they never loſt ſight of that; and were, of courſe, unanimous.

16. The words, *in which are ſome things hard to be underſtood,* are commonly applied to St. Paul's epiſtles. But the grammatical conſtruction does not make that neceſſary. Εν οις being neuter, cannot agree with επιςολαις, which is feminine. Εν οις rather ſeems to refer to *the things* which Peter himſelf had been diſcourſing about; particularly to the *promiſe of his coming* (ch. iii. 4) or *the reſurrection*; which was a great ſtumbling-block to many of the early chriſtians. Some ſaid the reſurrection was paſt. Others wanting patience to wait longer for it, left the chriſtian aſſemblies: and many conceiving it to be a thing impoſſible, gave no credit to it at all. No doubt, ſays the apoſtle, there is difficulty in theſe things, which the *unſtable wreſt,* &c.—It muſt not however be concealed, that ſome MSS of great credit read εν αις. But I think, it is the worſe reading, on a ſuppoſition that the two readings are equally authorized: for, tho many things in St. Paul's epiſtles may, for obvious reaſons be *hard to be underſtood* by *us*; yet one ſhould hardly believe, that St. Paul (writing *according to the wiſdom given unto him*) could be really *hard to be underſtood* by thoſe, to whom he wrote. Nor is it likely, I think, that St. Peter, if it had been ſo, would have leſſened the credit of St. Paul in his own churches, by giving them to underſtand, that he thought St. Paul an unintelligible writer.

END OF THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER.

PREFACE

TO THE

THREE EPISTLES OF ST. JOHN.

IN the firſt of theſe epiſtles, St. John gives an idea of the general intention of the goſpel; which was founded on the fall of man; and meant to purify his nature anew. He then dwells on chriſtian charity; and cautions his readers againſt the love of the world, which he conſiders as the cauſe of all irreligion. He exhorts to perſeverance—deſcribes the children of God—holds out the example of Chriſt—marks the character of the deceiver; and of the true chriſtian—concluding with a ſhort proof of the truth of the goſpel,

The ſecond epiſtle may be called an abſtract of the firſt. It touches, in few words, on the ſame points.

The third is chiefly a commendation of Gaius.

FIRST EPISTLE

OF

ST. JOHN.

CHAP. I.

1. FROM the many circumſtances, my brethren, with regard to
2. the life of Chriſt, to which I have been witneſs myſelf, I infer his eternal Godhead, and union with the Father, before his mani-
3. feſtation in the world. And on this evidence we have invited you into the ſame gracious fellowſhip in God, and Chriſt, which we
4. enjoy; that your happineſs in the profeſſion of theſe holy truths may be as great as ours.

5. But you muſt well conſider the conditional part of this gracious covenant. It is the conſtant tenor of the goſpel, that God is a
6. being of infinite purity; and that no one can have fellowſhip with
7. him, who allows himſelf in the practice of any ſin. On the other hand, he, who leads a life of purity, is both in communication with the chriſtian church; and may be aſſured, that the blood of
8. 9. 10. Chriſt will make atonement for all his repented ſins.——Thus the whole foundation of the chriſtian religion depends on the ſinfulneſs

6. 7. *Light and darkneſs* are often uſed in ſcripture, and particularly in St. John's works, to expreſs a *life of purity*, and a *life of wickedneſs*.

of

of our nature. He who denies this; and goes about to eſtabliſh the righteouſneſs of man, contradicts the whole ſcheme of chriſtianity: while he, who piouſly confeſſes and forſakes his ſins, ſhall through his Saviour's merits receive forgiveneſs.——My firſt wiſh therefore in what I ſay, is to guard you, as much as poſſible, againſt ſin: my ſecond, to ſet before you, if you have ſinned, Jeſus Chriſt as the only propitiation for ſin; and not for our ſins only, but for the ſins of the whole world. At the ſame time the only teſt we can give of our being the objects of this mercy, is to obſerve faithfully the precepts of the goſpel. He who pretends to the hopes of chriſtianity without this, may as well endeavour to reconcile the greateſt contradictions: while he, who obeys the goſpel, following with reverence thoſe bleſſed ſteps, which went before him, is perfected more and more in holineſs, by the love of God.

CHAP. II. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

And now, my brethren, in this I give you no new commandment; for the moral law was always a rule of duty. Only thus far the commandment is new; the goſpel hath explained and heightened ſome of the precepts of morality; particularly the duty of charity. For the practice of this duty, in it's moſt improved ſtate, is the very badge of the chriſtian profeſſion; and he who does not thus practiſe it, whatever his profeſſions may be, is ſtill in heathen darkneſs. The young convert, who hath juſt had his ſins forgiven, and been made acquainted with the mercies of God, ought to ſhew his thankfulneſs by the conſcientious practice of this duty. The confirmed chriſtian, who hath known his duty from the beginning, it

7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14.

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8. *Which thing is true in him, and in you*—in Chriſt, who gave the example—and in you, who ought to follow it.

13. Dr. Doddridge wiſhes to leave out this verſe, which he conjectures was leſt out in the original. No doubt, there is an unaccountable tautology in it; and indeed in all theſe three verſes, the 12th, the 13th, and the 14th, there is great difficulty.

may

may be hoped, will practiſe it. While he, who hath made no great advance; yet having ſeen the efficacy of the goſpel in reclaiming him from ſin, will feel it alſo in giving him a love for his neighbour.

15. Now the great point in clearing the way for the love of God, is to guard againſt a love for the world. This principle, you may be aſſured, is wholly inconſiſtent with a regard for the duties of religion.
16. The ſimplicity of the goſpel, and the pride, and vanity of the world,
17. agree very ill together.——And yet one might ſuppoſe, that the tranſitory condition of all the pleaſures of this world; and the ſtability of future happineſs, would be ſtrong arguments againſt the deluſions of life.

18. Let me now remind you, that the calamities of the Jewiſh ſtate are approaching faſt. You have heard that deceivers will then abound. The appearance of ſo many at preſent ſhew, that this cala-
19. mitous time is not far diſtant. They pretended a goſpel-commiſſion;

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18. Some interpreters, tho but few, will not allow the *laſt time*, to refer to the deſtruction of Jeruſalem; but rather to the ſhort duration of human life. But the deceivers, who are ſo conſtantly repreſented as accompanying the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, ſeem rather to connect it with that event.—The *laſt time* is however often a phraſe of wider import. The ſacred writers ſeem frequently to divide time into two large portions; the *former*, and the *latter*: the *former* time included the whole period before the goſpel; and the *latter* time, or the *laſt times*, included every period after it. Agreeably to this partition of time, they ſometimes ſpeak of Chriſt's *firſt*, and ſometimes of his *ſecond* coming. His firſt coming, including every event of the goſpel to the conſummation of all things, is often alſo divided into ſmaller portions. "*Chriſt comes in each diviſion, that is, as oft as he thinks fit to interpoſe by any ſignal act of his power and providence. The whole period, in which any diſtinct ſtate of his kingdom is carrying on, is likewiſe called the* LATTER TIME; *and the concluding part of that period is diſtinguiſhed by the name of the* LAST HOUR; *as if the whole of each period were conſidered as one day, and the cloſe of each period, as the end or laſt hour of the day. Thus the time that elapſed from Chriſt's aſcenſion to the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, being one of the ſubdiviſions before-mentioned, is called the* LATTER TIMES; *and the eve of it's deſtruction is called the* LAST HOUR. *He* WAS COMING, *through the whole time*; HE CAME *in the end of it.*" This very accurate, and judicious obſervation I had from Bp. Hurd. See his VIIth ſer. on proph.

but

but their leaving us, plainly ſhewed they had different views. You, who have received the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, are in no danger, I 20.
hope, from their deceptions. Nor do I write this to you through 21.
any diffidence: but juſt to mark the character of Antichriſt; which 22. 23.
conſiſts in denying Jeſus Chriſt to be the true Meſſiah. Aſſure yourſelves that no man can deny Chriſt, who hath a juſt idea of God himſelf.

In the mean time, hold faſt that faith, which hath been preached 24.
to you from the beginning, in the Father, and the Son; on which 25.
reſt all your hopes of eternal life. Seducers will always be en- 26.
deavouring to miſlead you. But that divine Spirit, which hath 27.
thus far led you into the truth; will, I doubt not, preſerve you in it.
Conſider the awfulneſs of that great day, when we ſhall all appear 28.
before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt. As certain as God is pure, ſo 29.
certain is it, that none but perſons of purity can ſtand before him. CHAP. III.
Such only he calls his children: ſuch only are the objects of his
love. At the ſame time, we muſt not expect, that the world, 1.
which rejects God, will regard his children.——But tho God is 2.
graciouſly pleaſed to call us his children, we have yet a very imperfect conception of the happineſs intended for us. One thing we know, that as we ſhall hereafter be with Chriſt, we ſhall reſemble him. And this hope ſhould make us wholly intent on purifying our 3.
earthly nature. Every wilful ſin is directly oppoſite to our pro- 4.
feſſion. It oppoſes the very intention of Chriſt's coming; which 5.
was to take away ſin. The chriſtian religion expects a ſteady com- 6.
pliance with it's precepts. The *wilful tranſgreſſor* therefore hath no conception of it's truth.

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1. We are told in the letters of the Daniſh miſſionaries (No. 7. p. 56) that when a Malabar convert was employed to tranſlate a catechiſm, in which the expreſſion, *we ſhall be the ſons of God*, occurred; he was ſtruck with the boldneſs of it, and durſt not tranſlate it verbally; but rather wiſhed to tranſlate it, *we ſhall be permitted to kiſs God's feet*.

Let

7. Let no man, then, my brethren, deceive you. It is your holy
8. lives alone, which make you the children of God. He, who ſins
9. wilfully, becomes the child of the devil. A real ſenſe of religion
10. prevents all wilful ſin: and above all other ſins, it will prevent
those of hatred, and malice; which are moſt oppoſite to all our
11. holy hopes. Brotherly love is the very badge of our profeſſion.
12. 13. But the wicked world, after the example of Cain, will perſecute
14. the true chriſtian, becauſe he is more righteous than they. Be
you happy however in the thought, that you ſhall thus attain
that heavenly temper, which will qualify you for everlaſting life.
15. He, who ſuffers malicious paſſions to get poſſeſſion of his heart,
16. effectually ſhuts himſelf out from the favour of God. What an
example have we in Chriſt to rouze us to kindneſs, and affection!
What acts of charity can we refuſe to others, when we conſider,
17. that he laid down his life for us! And can we ſuppoſe that per-
ſon to have any of this heavenly love in him, who refuſes to ad-
miniſter the trifling things of this world to the neceſſities of a
18. brother? We may talk of charity: but it is of no value, if it
dwell only on our lips. It muſt ſink into the heart, and become
19. a principle of action. It is then only that we can have any aſſurance
20. before God. If we are conſcious, that our charity is pretence, we
21. ſhould be conſcious alſo that God ſees our hypocriſy. Our con-
22. fidence before Him can depend only on our ſincerity; and it is
23. this holineſs of life, which gives efficacy to our prayers.——In
24. fine, then, the whole ſum of the chriſtian religion conſiſts in two
words, faith, and love. If your lives therefore be ſpent under
the influence of theſe two great principles, you ſhall enjoy a hea-
CHAP. IV. venly communication with God; and may be aſſured of his favour
by the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

1. And yet, my brethren, you will find much deception in the
2. world, and many pretences to this holy influence. But you have
one

one certain rule to detect impoſters. Whoever pretends, that Jeſus 3.
Chriſt is not the Meſſiah; but holds out to the people the expectation of ſome other deliverer, is certainly a deluder. The acknowledgment therefore of Jeſus Chriſt as the Meſſiah is the firſt teſt of truth.——A ſecond is the ſuperiority of thoſe powers, which God 4.
has conferred upon his holy ſervants.——A third, is the tendency 5.
of the doctrine they teach. The doctrine of the deluder is of a worldly nature. He ſpeaks only to the world; and the world only are his hearers. But our doctrines have a ſpiritual view; and 6.
are underſtood only by the ſpiritual; and theſe circumſtances form a diſtinction between them, and the doctrines of deluſion.

But above all things, let us ſhew brotherly kindneſs to each 7.
other; as nothing makes us more the children of God. He that 8.
loveth not his brother, can have no knowledge of God; for God is love. How was that love diſcovered to us in the death of 9.
Chriſt! We had no love for him, when he ſhewed that ſtupendous 10.
inſtance of love to us in dying for our ſins. How ought we then, 11.
in imitation of ſuch goodneſs, to love each other!——We cannot, 12.
it is true, ſee God: but we have the ſtrongeſt proof of his dwelling in us, if we feel our hearts full of love to each other. God will 13.
then ſhew that we are his, by ſhedding his Holy Spirit upon us; 14.
through which we teſtify the coming of Chriſt into the world; 15.
and ſhew that ſalvation depends only on him. In this great act 16.

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3. In order to underſtand the teſt, which the apoſtle here mentions, it is neceſſary to conſider, that the interpretation of the prophecies of the Jewiſh ſcriptures was, at this time, matter of great controverſy. The infidel Jews denied, they were fulfilled in Jeſus; and interpreted them of ſome future Meſſiah. So that theſe opinions became a dangerous ſnare to the whole body of Jewiſh converts; who were in the way of hearing arguments of this kind ſophiſtically treated. They were a ſnare alſo to the heathen convert; when he found that the Jews themſelves, to whom theſe prophecies had been given, and who might be ſuppoſed to underſtand them beſt, denied that ſenſe of them, which he had been always taught to believe was the baſis of chriſtianity.

of our Saviour's love, we firmly truſt——and are aſſured, that he who approaches neareſt to that divine affection, which Chriſt ſhewed,
17. approaches neareſt to God. By following the example of our bleſſed Lord, and making ourſelves like him in this world; we
18. hope to meet his favour, and be like him in the next. When the holy flame of love hath once taken poſſeſſion of our hearts, all vain fears, diſtreſs, and uneaſineſs are excluded, with regard both to this
19. world, and the next.——Thus ought our bleſſed Saviour to be the
20. 21. object of our love from his great kindneſs to us.—But let us conſider one thing well, that the love of our neighbour, muſt be the
CHAP. V. teſt of our love of God: for a man will hardly love God, who is not the object of his ſenſes; if he hath no love for his brother,
1. 2. 3. who is continually with him.——Thus we have two great teſts, as well as principles, of our religion—faith, and love. The love of God conſiſts in keeping his commandments: and if we keep the commandments of God; of courſe we ſhall love our neighbour;
4. 5. and ſhall find our happineſs in our obedience. The faith of a chriſtian, and that regenerating principle, which it introduces in
6. the mind of man, placeth us above the world: and this faith depends on the evidences given at the baptiſm, and death of Chriſt;
7. and on the miracles, which he wrought through the Spirit. Two or

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6. There is always a diſtinction made in ſcripture between the πνευμα, or Spirit, *through which miracles were wrought*; and the το αγιον πνευμα, or Holy Ghoſt, through which *the underſtanding was enlightened; and prophetic gifts, and tongues diſpenſed*. See Heb. ii. 4, and Gal. iii. 5.——Our Saviour gave his diſciples power to work miracles; and yet we are expreſsly told that the *Holy Ghoſt was not then given*—There is however great difficulty, no doubt, in the laſt chapter of St. John's epiſtle.

7. I ſhall not enter into the diſpute about this famous verſe. They who wiſh to examine it, may conſult Mills's edit. of the New Teſtament. Other divines alſo have treated it largely. A late ingenious treatiſe has been written profeſſedly on the ſubject by George Travis, M. A. who hath endeavoured to eſtabliſh the authority of this text; tho he hath had able opponents.

After

or three witneſſes in all human affairs are thought ſufficient. To the truth of our religion we have the teſtimony of three—the Father—the Son—and the Holy Ghoſt; who, as they are equal in power, unite alſo in teſtimony. And this *heavenly* teſtimony 8.
agrees alſo with the *earthly* one I have mentioned—the miracles, which our Saviour wrought—the evidence, that appeared at his baptiſm; and the evidence that appeared at his death. Such is 9.
the teſtimony of God to this great truth; which is certainly ſuperior to any human teſtimony.

Beſides, he who truely believes, feels all this evidence fully con- 10.
firmed in himſelf. Whereas he who diſbelieves, rejects the ſtrongeſt teſtimony of God; and gives up all the hopes of his ſalvation; 11. 12.
which depends on his faith in Chriſt, and obedience to his laws.

Thus I have endeavoured to ſhew you on what grounds you 13.
may hope for the mercies of God. And this will point out to you 14. 15.
the ſpirit of ſuch prayers, as will find acceptance in his ſight. Particularly if any of your ſociety is viſited with ſickneſs for his 16.
ſins, let public prayers be made; and if his ſin be not of ſuch a nature, as God may think fit to puniſh with death, (in which caſe the offender muſt be leſt to the divine mercy) the devout prayers

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After all, I cannot help obſerving, that it appears rather below the chriſtian cauſe to be ſo zealous in defending a text, which in all ages hath been thought ſo very doubtful. I know not whether, for *that very reaſon* I ſhould not wiſh to leave it in its uncertainty. The more pains we take to ſecure it, the more it appears as if we thought the doctrine it contains, reſted ſolely on it's authority; which we do not by any means ſuppoſe to be the caſe.

10. This mode of evidence, however forcible among the firſt chriſtians, who were endowed with the viſible gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, hath been too much preſumed on in modern times.

16. We have many inſtances in ſcripture of the *infliction of temporal puniſhments*. How far it may be agreeable to God's government now, when miraculous powers of all kinds have ceaſed, we know not: it is certain however we have no right to aſcribe any thing of this kind to God's judgments.

16. This is a very difficult paſſage. I have endeavoured however to explain it agreeably to the ſenſe of James v. 14, 15, 16, which ſeems to be the beſt comment upon it.

17. of the church will be heard. Every wilfull tranſgreſſion of the
18. law is ſin; tho ſome ſins are more heinous than others.——The ſincere chriſtian however, by the grace of God, is in no danger
19. of theſe great tranſgreſſions. While the world around him lies
20. in wickedneſs, he enjoys the light of God. His religion hath cleared his underſtanding, and he dwells in God through Chriſt.

21. Let the great concluſion from the whole, be, never to entangle yourſelves again in the idolatry, and pollutions of a wicked world. Amen!

END OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN.

SECOND EPISTLE

OF

ST. JOHN.

CHAP. I.

JOHN the apoſtle, together with all the chriſtians of theſe parts, to the church at Jeruſalem, and all it's members—grace, mercy, and peace from God in Chriſt! 1. 2. 3.

It hath always been a great joy to me to find your members adhering ſtrictly to the faith of Chriſt, as it hath been delivered to them. But you will remember, that when we preached faith, we 4.

1. It is a diſputed point, whether the *elect lady* means ſome particular perſon, or ſome church in general. They who apply the phraſe to a church, ſuppoſe it the church of Jeruſalem; both becauſe St. John was an apoſtle of the circumciſion; and becauſe the word κυρια, they think, applies beſt to a mother-church. Others however ſuppoſe ſome Aſiatic church; and in particular the church of Philadelphia, to be meant.—The greater part of interpreters however give the phraſe a *general*, rather than a *particular* turn. The ſalutation at the end, from the *children of thy elect ſiſter* favour it: and churches are often thus ſtiled in ſcripture. See Iſa. xlvii. 5, 7. And indeed there is nothing perſonal in the whole epiſtle, except perhaps the 10th verſe: and that may as well admit a general interpretation. The chief argument, I think, for its being *particular*, is, that the next epiſtle is plainly ſo.

4. The word *truth* in this verſe, ſeems to ſtand for the *principles* of religion. In the 5th verſe the apoſtle ſpeaks of the *practice*; which was to follow the *faith*, which had from the beginning been preached.

always

6. always added love to it: and there is no other way of ſhewing your
7. love to God, but by keeping his commandments. The world is full of deceivers. You will hear it ſaid by many; that the true
8. Meſſiah hath not yet appeared. But be upon your guard, leſt you loſe at once all that happineſs, which this holy faith hath promiſed.
9. And be aſſured of this, that there is no other religion in the world,
10. that is acceptable to God, but the religion of Chriſt.——Conſidering the peril of the times, I would not wiſh you to have communication
11. with thoſe, whoſe principles, and practice are corrupt; leſt ſuch intercourſe ſhould corrupt you; and make you partakers of the wicked opinions, they may propagate.

12. I have many things to ſay to you, on theſe, and other heads; but I ſhall not mention them now, as I propoſe ſoon to ſee you.

13. All the members of this church ſalute you.

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7. See a note on 1 John iv. 3.

End of the Second Epistle of St. John.

THIRD EPISTLE

OF

ST. JOHN.

CHAP. I.

JOHN the apoſtle, to his beloved Gaius, and fellow-diſciple in Chriſt—health, and happineſs both in this world, and the next! 1. 2.

The accounts which I have received, of your ſteadineſs in the faith, are highly ſatisfactory to me. Indeed I have no greater joy, than to hear of the holy lives of chriſtians.——Your charity, and hoſpitality to all the brethren; and the aſſiſtance you give them on their ſeveral journeys, which I hear from all people, are moſt pleaſing to me. They have been ever careful, you know, not to burthen the Gentiles; and therefore ſuch as aſſiſt them, are greatly inſtrumental in promoting the intereſts of the goſpel. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.

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1. Who Gaius, or Caius, was, is uncertain. Many ſuppoſe he was that perſon at Corinth, whom St. Paul calls his hoſt; Rom. xvi. 23, and that he was extremely generous, and hoſpitable to all chriſtians, who came there. His hoſpitable temper is ſtrongly marked in the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th verſes of this chapter.

I ſhould

9. I ſhould have written, at this time, to the church in general; but I was afraid leſt Diotrephes, who ſeems to be fond of power, ſhould have too much weight in oppoſing any thing I could ſay at
10. a diſtance. I propoſe therefore to check his influence by a viſit among you; in which I ſhall correct both his words, and actions: particularly that violence of temper, with which he refuſes to receive the brethren; and even ſets himſelf againſt thoſe, who would
11. receive them. Follow not ſuch examples; but take it for granted, that where you ſee a wrong behaviour; there alſo you will find a
12. want of faith.——I am glad however, that Demetrius is every where ſo well ſpoken of. In him I cannot be deceived.

13. 14. I have many things to ſay to you; but I ſhall not make them the ſubject of a letter, as I mean ſpeedily to ſee you.——Peace be with you!——All here ſalute you; and the brethren, that are with you.

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9. Commentators are divided in their opinions about Diotrephes. Many ſuppoſe, he was not a heretic; but a member of the church, whoſe chief fault was the want of a proper humility of mind. But I think the apoſtle ſpeaks in ſtronger terms againſt him, than is conſiſtent with this ſuppoſition.

11. *He that doth good is of God:* that is, he who obeys the commandments of God, ſhews his belief in that God, who gave the commandment.

END OF THE THIRD EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN.

PREFACE.

TO THE

EPISTLE OF ST. JUDE.

ST. Jude is ſcarce mentioned in the evangelical hiſtory; except in the different catalogues of the apoſtles. He is among thoſe, who are called the *brethren of our Lord*; by which expreſſion ſome underſtand him to have been the ſon of Joſeph, by a former wife; and others, a relation of Mary's. Euſebius * tells us, (from Hegeſippus, a chriſtian Jew, born in the beginning of the ſecond century) that Domitian, in a fit of jealouſy, ordering enquiry to be made after the poſterity of David, ſome of the grand-children of St. Jude were brought before him. The emperor firſt aſking them ſeveral queſtions about their profeſſion, and manner of life, which was huſbandry; inquired next about the kingdom of Chriſt? And when it ſhould appear? To this they anſwered, That it was a ſpiritual, not a temporal kingdom; and that it ſhould not be manifeſted, till the end of the world.—On this the emperor, finding they were mean perſons, and their principles perfectly harmleſs, diſmiſſed them.

The great intention of this epiſtle is to exhort chriſtians to perſevere in the faith—to avoid the wickedneſs of the times—and to be on their guard againſt deceivers.

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* Lib. III. cap. iv.

GENERAL EPISTLE

OF

St. JUDE.

CHAP. I.

1. 2. JUDE the ſervant of Chriſt, and brother of James, to all chriſtians, however diſperſed—mercy, peace, and love!

3. My chief purpoſe in this epiſtle, is to exhort you to perſevere
4. ſteadily in the faith, which you have received; for many deceivers are now abroad in the world (as it was propheſied there ſhould be) who denying the firſt principles of the chriſtian faith, change
5. chriſtian charity into worldly luſts. But I would wiſh to admoniſh you, (tho you have been well inſtructed in theſe things) of the terrible judgments of God againſt wickedneſs.——After the Iſraelites had been delivered out of Egypt, you remember what wrath, and
6. deſtruction, attended their obſtinate perverſeneſs.——Even the angels, who ſwerved from their allegiance to God, were not ſpared;
7. but are reſerved for the judgment of the great day.——The ex-

4. Thus I ſhould tranſlate the words, *of old ordained to this condemnation.*

7. *Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire*—that is, thoſe cities were *for ever deſtroyed.* The apoſtle cannot well mean *future puniſhments*; becauſe he mentions it as a Δειγμα—ſomething that was to be a *viſible example* to all. That word (deriving from δεικνυμαι to *ſhew* or *exhibit*) *properly* ſignifies to *give a ſample of ſomething to be ſold.*

amples

amples of Sodom, and Gomorrah, and the cities around them—their vile lufts—and the punifhment they drew upon themfelves, can never be forgotten.

And yet, you fee, how the wickednefs of thefe times prevails— 8. 9. 10.
what abominable uncleannefs—what general corruption—what oppofition to all government! Their very language difcovers the pollution of their hearts. Even their traditional accounts, fo much the object of their attention, in which the contefl is related between Michael, and the devil about the body of Mofes, give them very different inftruction. There, tho the contention was fo debafing the arch-angel treats his adverfary even with gentlenefs: while
they follow the examples of the very worft perfons they find re- 11.
corded in the bible-hiftory—the malice of Cain—the covetoufnefs, and feducing arts of Balaam—and the implacable oppofition of Corah.
A feaft of charity they turn into wantonnefs. Like unwholfome 12.
air, they blaft wherever they come. Like withered trees, they
only incumber the ground. Like waves, they fpend their rage 13.
only in foam. Like uncertain meteors, their light foon fets in
darknefs.——Againft fuch perfons Enoch prophefied, when fpeak- 14. 15.
ing of the old world, he threatens them with God's heavy difpleafure for their enormous crimes. Nor can thofe times furnifh worfe 16.

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9. We are under the neceffity of making the beft fenfe we can, of this very difficult paffage, which has received fo little elucidation from the hands of commentators.—They who do not like the fuppofition, that the apoftle alludes to fome traditional account of the angels burying the body of Mofes, which the devil wifhed to have difcovered, that the people might worfhip it, may fuppofe that he alludes to Zech. iii. 2, in which Jofhua, the high prieft, is reprefented ftanding before the angel of the Lord; and Satan ftanding at his right hand to refift him: to whom the angel faid, The Lord rebuke thee. Jofhua the high prieft may ftand for the Jewifh people; which *the body of Mofes* in this paffage may alfo reprefent. It is a familiar mode of fpeaking; St. Paul calls chriftians the *body of Chrift*.

12. The text fays *twice dead*; the apoftle may mean, that they were once wicked Jews, and having apoftatized, are now wicked chriftians. Or perhaps he only expreffes more ftrongly their deadnefs, as Virgil expreffing happinefs, fays,——terque, quaterque beati.

examples, than these, of pride, uncleanness, and wickedness of every kind.

17. But do you, my brethren, always keep in mind, what you have
18. 19. so often heard predicted; that at this time, deceivers should arise who should separate themselves from the church—relinquish all it's blessings—and in the spirit of sensuality, follow their own
20. 21. lusts.—You, in the mean time, being firmly established in the faith, and having a holy communication with God, through the Spirit, keep steadily obedient to the divine laws; and wait patiently for that blessed reward, which is promised to you through Christ.

22. 23. Treat the weak with gentleness—the stubborn, and obstinate with severity; having affection for their persons, while you abo-
24. 25. minate their crimes. And may that gracious God, who created, and redeemed you, preserve you faultless to that great day! To him be glory, majesty, and dominion, for ever. Amen!

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14. We have no account of any such prophecy; unless the apostle alludes to the name of his son *Methuselah*, which signifies, that *after his death, should succeed destruction*, that is the flood.

END OF THE EPISTLE BY ST. JUDE.

PREFACE

TO THE

REVELATION OF ST. JOHN.

THE Revelation of St. John ſeems univerſally acknowledged to be a very authentic part of the ſacred canon. It is mentioned as ſuch by ſome of the earlieſt fathers; particularly by Ireneus, who lived in the ſecond century, and was acquainted with Policarp, who had been the diſciple of St. John himſelf.——After citing the authority of ſo early a father, it is needleſs to adduce the teſtimony of later writers—Clement, Tertullian, Origen, and others, who are yet full to the ſame purpoſe.

True it is, that, in after ages (probably as certain prophecies, thoſe of Antichriſt in particular, began to unfold themſelves with a ſeverer aſpect) ſome learned men ventured to heſitate, and propoſe doubts. But on laying the whole of the evidence together, the deepeſt inquirers into this work, have profeſſed themſelves fully convinced of it's authenticity. At the head of theſe we may place the learned Joſeph Mede, who is eſteemed one of the ableſt commentators on this myſterious book. He gives it plainly as his opinion, that the revelation of St. John depends on as indiſputable authority, as that of any other book of the New Teſtament *.——Sir Iſaac Newton, with equal confidence, in his obſervations on Daniel, heſitates not to make the very ſame aſſertion †.——To theſe teſtimonies we may add that of Dr. Lardner ‡, who is ſecond to none in learning, and

* See his works, p. 602. † p. 249. ‡ Hiſt. of the writers of the N. T. ch. 22.

accurate

accurate refearches. This able inquirer hath fully collected all the evidence as it ſtands on both ſides of the queſtion; and on a review of the whole, expreſſes himſelf clearly ſatisfied of the authenticity of this book.

After fixing the authenticity of it, the next object of our inquiry is the intention of it. It is ſuppoſed to hold out the prophetic hiſtory of the church of Chriſt, to the lateſt period. Many interpreters conceive the viſions it contains to be detached, and independent. Others ſuppoſe the whole texture of it to be wrought into one uniform, conſiſtent plan. Among the latter is Mr. Mede, who divides it into three great parts.——The firſt part, he ſuppoſes, contains the epiſtles to the ſeven churches; and is not conceived by him to be of a prophetic nature. This part is comprized in the three firſt chapters.——The ſecond part contains the viſions of the *ſealed book;* on the leaves of which the civil revolutions of the Roman empire, as they are connected with the church, are ſuppoſed to be portrayed in a kind of prophetic tablature. This part begins at the fourth chapter; and ends with the ninth.——The third part, which commences at the tenth chapter, is called the viſion of the *open book;* and is delivered under an image, not unfrequent in the prophetic writers, of eating a book; which fills the prophet with the viſions it contains. This part is ſuppoſed to hold forth the latter periods of the church; it's apoſtaſy from the truth, and it's final reſtoration.——Yet tho the plan of the whole is ſuppoſed by this learned writer to be conſiſtent, and uniform; the prophecies contained under each viſion; are not all conceived to be diſtinct. Many of them are thought to ſynchronize, or to relate to the ſame events. Thus the ſeventh ſeal is ſuppoſed to contain the ſeven trumpets; and the ſeventh trumpet to contain the ſeven vials.

Such is the plan of Mr. Mede. How far he, and other writers, who have followed, or deviated from his ſteps, have been ſucceſsful in elucidating this very myſterious book, muſt ſtill be left as matter of great uncertainty. The obſcurity of the ſubject makes it eaſy to hazard an ingenious conjecture: and, no doubt many things have been ſaid upon it, which have nothing better than ingenious conjecture to ſupport them; eſpecially in explaining the detail of each prophecy, in which perhaps many little circumſtances, not eſſential to the main ſubject of it, are interpreted with a preciſion below the dignity of the prophet. How eaſily the

the wit of man may err in *conjecturing* on this difficult ſubject, may be illuſtrated by a remarkable ſtory, which biſhop Burnet * tells of the learned biſhop Lloyd of Worceſter, who had employed twenty years of profound ſtudy on this myſterious book. In the year 1696, it ſeems the emperor concluded a peace with the Turks. On the occaſion of this event, biſhop Lloyd informed his friends, with great confidence, that this was the laſt war, in which the Turks ſhould ever engage with the emperor; that their power was now abridged; and that he did not ſay this from conjecture; but founded it on the revelations of St. John.——How clearly he underſtood the revelations of St. John, may be known by conſulting the annals of Europe ſince that period!

Prophecy was certainly not given us to *exerciſe the imagination;* but to *prove the truth.* When *we pretend* to be prophets ourſelves, by predicting an event from the revelations, or any other prophetic part of ſcripture, *before* the completion of it, we may eaſily fall into the error of the good biſhop. If a prophecy be not clearly compleated; if it be not almoſt like a mathematical demonſtration, ſelf-evident; if the wit of man be ſtill neceſſary to unfold, and explain it; it is no proof. It wants itſelf to be proved. All the grand prophecies, on which the truth of chriſtianity depends, have been thus clearly compleated. No candid perſon doubts the completion of thoſe prophecies, which relate to the life, and death of the Meſſiah—to the call of the Gentiles—to the rejection of the Jews—and to the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. On ſome particular prophecies heſitation may ariſe; but the whole together carries full conviction. But with regard to the apocalyptic prophecies, we have not that preciſion. They ſtill want a full completion. Of this, the *various interpretations* of them, which are given to this day, are ſufficient proof. The characters of Antichriſt indeed are ſo ſtrongly marked, and have been ſo *generally acknowledged,* through all the reformed parts of Europe, as the chief ground of their defection from Rome, that we run little riſk, I think, in applying them to the Romiſh church. Theſe marks indeed are furniſhed not only by St. John; but alſo by St. Paul, in his delineation of the *man of ſin.*——Equally pointed is the pro-

* See his Hiſt. of his own time, V. II, p. 204.

phecy

phecy of the whore of Babylon *. The value of the argument, on this ſubject, may, in a degree be aſcertained from the courſe of it. The proteſtants firſt took it up; and applied the character of the whore of Babylon to papal Rome. The marks of the *beaſt* were ſo ſtrong, that the papiſts themſelves, in part, acknowledged them; that is, they have generally allowed, that the city of Rome was figured out by Babylon: but they have endeavoured to prove, that it was *imperial*, not *papal* Rome; which the prophet meant to delineate. The evaſion is awkward; both becauſe the marks do not correſpond with imperial Rome; and becauſe they were never affixed to it, till after the proteſtants had firſt applied them to the papacy.

After all, however, I know not that we have any right in charity, to *determine abſolutely*, that the whore of Babylon is the church of Rome, till we ſee that church reduced to the low condition of the apocalyptic whore. There is no occaſion, it is true, to ſuppoſe her fall to be inſtantaneous; but gradual: and ſhe hath no doubt, in a great degree fallen from her imperial dignity: yet ſtill, while ſhe continues to exiſt—eſpecially in that ſplendor, which at preſent ſhe maintains, we ſhould interpret theſe myſterious characters with caution. Till *Babylon is fallen*, the prophecy is *not compleatly fulfilled*.

In the mean time, tho we cannot underſtand all the myſterious parts of this ſingular book; yet (it's divine authority being ſafe) we take it into our hands with the utmoſt reverence; and conſider it as a depoſit for the confirmation of the faith of future ages. It is to us preciſely what the prophecies of the Old Teſtament were to the Jews. Thoſe prophecies adminiſtred to them, the hope of the Meſſiah. The pious Jew looked into thoſe holy books, as Simeon did, for the *conſolation of Iſrael*. We, in the ſame manner, look up to theſe prophecies of the apocalypſe for the full conſummation of the great ſcheme of the goſpel; when chriſtianity ſhall finally prevail over all the corruptions of the world; and be univerſally eſtabliſhed in it's utmoſt purity.

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* The reader may ſee the ſum of what has been written on this ſubject, well explained, and brought to a point, in biſhop Hurd's lectures, preached at Lincoln's inn.

But

But besides the prophetic character of this book, it is, in other respects, of a very singular construction. No writings perhaps ever exhibited so great a variety of sublime ideas; and such astonishing grandeur of divine imagery. So that if we consider the revelation of St. John only as a poetical description of the celestial regions; and the dispensations of God; it is a very delightful, and interesting composition. The glories of heaven in the fourth chapter; the picture of death in the sixth; together with the consummation of all things; and the terrors of the wicked, are grand representations. How sublime is the idea, in the seventh chapter, of the angels restraining the winds?——How nobly are the angels introduced in the eighth, with the seven trumpets; and with what poetical imagery does the smoke of the incense carry up the prayers of the saints before the throne of God?——The sounding of the fourth trumpet is very grand; and the flight of the angel through the copes of heaven, denouncing woe upon the earth.——The ascent of the locusts in the smoke of the bottomless pit; the description of them; and the sounding of their wings in their flight, are all circumstances highly poetical: as are also the loosing the four angels from the banks of Euphrates, on the sounding of the sixth trumpet; the description of the angel with the open book at the beginning of the tenth chapter; the reaping of the earth in the middle of the fourteenth; the grand scene in the fifteenth, on sending out the seven angels with vials; and the pouring out particularly of the last of them.——After these splendid passages follows that noble scene in the eighteenth chapter, in which the fall of Babylon is described; and the pathetic lamentations made over her, by the kings, and merchants of the earth.——The seventeenth and eighteenth verses of the nineteenth chapter are wonderfully sublime; in which an angel standing in the sun is represented calling the birds of prey to the banquet of the Lord, as the host of heaven is led out to battle.——The sealing up of the dragon; and the general judgment in the twentieth chapter; and the descent of the New Jerusalem in the twenty-first, close these sublime passages with equal grandeur.

The generality of these visions, as hath been observed, are represented under the idea of pictures, portrayed on the leaves of a book. The prophet therefore employs picturesque, as well as poetical imagery;

 and

and hath marked the various figures he hath introduced, with ſuch a glow of colouring, and ſtrength of expreſſion, as plainly ſhew, how much his imagination was fired with the original.

The myſterious parts of this wonderful book, I have not attempted to explain, contenting myſelf merely with illuſtrating the narrative. Here too I have been more cautious in modernizing, than in the goſpels, and epiſtles. As I endeavoured there to *explain*, I was obliged often to give up the dignity, and ſimplicity of the expreſſion, for the ſake of making the narrative, or the doctrine, more eaſy. But here, as I have made no attempts of that kind, I have left the text more pure; and more in poſſeſſion of thoſe bold, eaſtern modes of ſpeaking, which add ſo much to it's grandeur.

REVELATION

OF

ST. JOHN.

CHAP. I.

THE following is a revelation from God, through Chriſt, concerning things relating to the kingdom of the Meſſiah, which ſhall ſoon be accompliſhed. 1. 2.

This revelation God gave to his ſervant John; who had already borne teſtimony to the truth. Happy are they, whom it concerns, 3.
if they attend obediently to the prophecies contained in it; the completion of which approaches.

John to the ſeven churches of Aſia, grace, and peace from the 4.
eternal, immutable God; from the Holy Ghoſt; and from Jeſus 5.
Chriſt, who was raiſed from the dead, and is now exalted to infinite glory!——To him, who hath redeemed us with his blood; and 6.
given us acceſs to the Father, be glory and dominion for ever, and

1. The expreſſion, *which muſt ſhortly come to paſs*, need not be ſuppoſed to denote any *immediate completion*; but to be ſpoken in the language of heaven, in which *a thouſand years are as one day*.

6. 7. Theſe verſes ſeem to be a ſort of analyſis of what is contained in the book—that is, the full concluſion of the chriſtian diſpenſation. They ſeem to contain the great moral of the whole.

7. ever; Amen!—I ſee him coming in the clouds of heaven! every eye ſhall ſee him—his murderers ſhall acknowledge his power—all the tribes of the earth ſhall mourn before him. Amen. Amen!
8. —Thus he proclaims his glorious approach. I AM THE FIRST, AND THE LAST—THE BEGINNING, AND THE END—WHO IS, AND WAS, AND IS TO COME—THE ETERNAL, ALMIGHTY GOD.

9. I John, the companion of your afflictions, and the partaker of your hope in Chriſt, was in the iſland of Patmos, where I had
10. been baniſhed on the account of the faith: and being earneſtly engaged on the Lord's day, in meditation and prayer; I heard a voice behind me, loud as a trumpet, ſaying; I am the beginning, and
11. the end—the firſt and the laſt. Write what thou ſeeſt in a book; and ſend it to the churches of Aſia; Epheſus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatria, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.
12. Surprized at this wonderful voice, I turned round to ſee from whence it iſſued; and ſaw ſeven golden candleſticks hanging in
13. circular order; and in the midſt of them an awful figure, like the Son of man. He was cloathed in a long robe, girt round him
14. 15. 16. with a golden girdle. His hair was white as ſnow; his countenance like the ſun ſhining in his ſtrength; his eyes like a flame of fire; and his voice ſounded like the fall of waters. From his mouth a

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9. Patmos was one of the Cyclades in the Egean ſea, where St. John was baniſhed, according to Ireneaus, about the year 96.

11. If you inſpect a map of Aſia Minor, you will find theſe churches lie in a circular order; ſo that if you begin at Epheſus, you may viſit them all in the rotation marked by the apoſtle; which was probably the courſe of his viſitation.

12. The ſeven candleſticks allude to the golden lamp with its branches in the temple of Jeruſalem. Throughout this book indeed there is a conſtant alluſion to the ceremonies, and ritual of the Jewiſh worſhip.

ſharp

ſharp two-edged ſword ſeemed to iſſue. In his right hand he held ſeven ſtars; and his feet appeared like braſs, glowing in a furnace.

At the ſight of ſuch an awful figure I was unable to ſpeak, and 17.
fell down at his feet. He laid his hand gently upon me, and ſaid,
"Fear not, I am the firſt and the laſt. I am he alſo who died, 18.
and roſe again; and now live for ever; and hold the keys of ever-
laſting life. Write what thou haſt ſeen. This viſion relates to 19.
preſent, and future times. The ſeven candleſticks repreſent ſeven 20.
churches; and the ſeven ſtars, the miniſters of thoſe churches."

CHAP. II.

To the church of Epheſus, and it's miniſters write;—Thus ſaith
he, who holdeth the ſeven ſtars in his right hand; and ſtandeth 1. 2. 3.
in the midſt of the ſeven golden candleſticks: I know thy virtuous
deeds; thy patience in affliction; thy abhorrence of wickedneſs,
thy caution againſt falſhood. Yet I have a matter againſt thee. 4.
Thy ancient zeal, and love for the truth, are in part gone off. 5.
Repent of this luke-warmneſs. Recover thy old affections; or I
will come ſuddenly, and remove thy candleſtick.——Yet thou hateſt 6.
the Nicolaitanes, whom I alſo hate.——Let him who hath ears 7.
to hear, remember what is ſaid to the churches. He who reſiſteth
the temptations of the world, ſhall eat of the tree of life, in the
paradiſe of God.

To the church of Smyrna, and it's miniſters, write;—Thus ſaith 8.
the firſt, and the laſt; he who was dead, and is alive. I know 9.
thy works; thy diſtreſſes, and ſufferings for religion. God will
repay thee. I know alſo the blaſphemy of falſe brethren; and
their perſecution of thee. But fear them not: fear not the afflictions, 10.
which thou haſt yet to ſuffer for the ſpace of ten days. Be faithful

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10. Thoſe commentators, who ſuppoſe, that theſe epiſtles to the ſeven churches of Aſia, relate to the church of Chriſt as divided into ſeven periods, conſider the church of Smyrna as repreſenting the church of Chriſt in it's perſecuted ſtate; making the ten days relate to the ten general perſecutions.

unto

11. unto death; and I will give thee a crown of life.——Let him who hath ears to hear, remember what is ſaid to the churches. He who reſiſteth the temptations of the world, ſhall not die eternally.

12. To the church of Pergamos, and it's miniſters, write thus;—Theſe
13. things ſaith he, from whoſe mouth iſſues a two-edged ſword. I know thy works, and thy habitation among thoſe, who oppoſe the truth: and that thou haſt ſtill holden faſt thy profeſſion; particularly
14. in the days of Antipas, my faithful martyr. But I have yet againſt thee thy connection with thoſe, who practiſe the wickedneſs of Balaam; who lay the ſtumbling block of deluſion before their brethren; who eat things ſacrificed to idols, and commit fornication.
15. Such are thoſe of the Nicolaitane hereſy. Repent therefore of theſe
16. wicked connections; or thou ſhalt be conſumed with the ſword,
17. that iſſueth from my mouth.——Let him who hath an ear to hear, remember what is ſaid to the churches. He who reſiſteth the temptations of the world, ſhall be fed with the manna of heaven. He ſhall receive a tablet, inſcribed with that ſecret name, which ſhall intitle him to everlaſting life.

18. To the church of Thyatira, and it's miniſters, write;—Thus ſaith
19. he, whoſe eyes are like a flame of fire; and whoſe feet are like glowing braſs. I know thy righteous deeds; thy faith; thy ſervices,
20. and thy increaſe in good works. But I have ſomewhat againſt thee, in that thou ſuffereſt thy people to be deluded by the witchcrafts of
21. Jezebel; and to tread in her idolatrous ſteps. I have given them
22. time to repent. If they continue obſtinate, I will bring my laſt afflictions upon thoſe, who delude; and upon thoſe, who are
23. deluded; and I will cut off their poſterity; and all the churches ſhall know, that my judgments ſearch deep; and that I will reward,

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17. The *white ſtone* inſcribed, alludes to the cuſtom of paſſing judgments, making elections, &c. by white, and black ſtones.

and

and punish men according to their works. As for those, who 24.
abhor these delusions, I will leave on them such burthens only, as
their profession lays upon them. Hold fast the faith till I come.
He that resisteth the temptations of the world, and persevereth to 25. 26.
the end, shall rule over the nations; and his spiritual rod shall 27.
break in pieces the idolatry of the land, as a potter's vessel is broken: 28.
and I will give him the brightness, and glory of the morning star.— 29.
Let him, who hath an ear to hear, remember what is said to the
churches. CHAP. III.

To the church of Sardis, and it's ministers, write thus;—These 1.
things saith he, who holdeth the seven stars, and with whom are
the seven spirits of God. I know thy deeds, and the name thou
holdest among the churches. But thy religion is dead. Rouse 2.
thyself, and awake it's holy flame in thy breast. Thy works are
not perfect in the sight of God. Remember the early instructions 3.
of thy youth. Hold them fast in thy memory; and repent of thy
sins. If not, I will come upon thee suddenly to destroy thee. A 4. 5.
few I have yet in Sardis; holy, and undefiled. These, and all
that resist the temptations of the world, shall stand before me in
white garments. Their names shall not be blotted from the book
of life; and I will present them to the Father before all his holy
angels.——Let him, who hath an ear to hear, remember what 6.
is said to the churches.

To the church of Philadelphia, and it's ministers, write thus;—— 7.
These things saith the Holy One. He who hath the key of David.
He who openeth, and none can shut: He who shutteth, and none
can open. I know thy works. I have opened the door before 8.
thee; and none can shut it. Thou hast kept my word. Thou 9.

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7. Alluding to Isa. xxii. 22.

8. St. Paul often uses the same image 1 Cor. xvi. 9. 2 Cor. ii. 12; and again Col. iv. 3.

hast

haſt not denied my name. The apoſtate Jew ſhall bow before
thee; and ſhall hereafter acknowledge thee to be the favorite of
10. heaven. Becauſe thou haſt patiently kept my word, I will preſerve
11. thee from thoſe trials, which are coming on the earth. Behold I
will come quickly. Keep thine integrity. Let no man deprive
12. thee of thy crown. He who reſiſteth the temptations of the world,
ſhall be a pillar in the temple of God. It ſhall ſtand immoveable.
On it ſhall be inſcribed the name of God; the name alſo of the
city of God, the new Jeruſalem; and on it ſhall be inſcribed my
13. own new name.——Let him, who hath an ear to hear, remember
what is ſaid to the churches.

14. To the church of Laodicea, and it's miniſters, write thus;——
15. Theſe things ſaith the truth; the Lord of the creation. I know
16. thy works; thy profeſſions; and thy hypocriſy. O that thou
wert either a thorough gentile, or a thorough chriſtian! Thou
17. art neither; and I reject thee. In the midſt of all thy profeſſions,
18. thou art poor, and wretched. Purchaſe thy gold of me; and thou
ſhalt be rich. Cloath thyſelf with the white raiment, that I ſhall
give thee; and thy nakedneſs ſhall be hid. Anoint thine eyes with
19. the ointment of truth; and thou ſhalt ſee. Whom I love, I reprove.
20. Be zealous, and repent. Behold, I ſtand at the door, and knock.
21. If any one heareth my voice, and openeth; I enter, and abide with
him. He who reſiſteth the temptations of the world, ſhall ſit
with me on my throne, as I ſit with my Father on his throne.——
22. Let him, who hath an ear to hear, remember what is ſaid to the
churches†.

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15. The word αρχη is uſed in this ſenſe in Eph. iii. 10—and Col. i. 16.

† Theſe epiſtles to the churches are ſuppoſed to repreſent the things that *now are* (ſee chap. i. 19) or the ſtate of religion in thoſe churches, at the time the apoſtle wrote.

After

CHAP. IV.

After this firſt viſion I had a ſecond. I ſaw the doors of heaven thrown open; and heard a voice like the ſound of a trumpet, calling to me; Come up hither; and I will ſhew thee what ſhall come to paſs. 1.

Immediately I was tranſported into heaven, and ſaw a glorious form, ſitting on a throne. The throne was circled by a varied light, like a rainbow, which emitted from every part, ſplendid rays, like lightning; while awful ſounds of ſpeaking thunder proclaimed aloud the majeſty of the appearance. Around the throne ſat four and twenty elders, cloathed in white garments, with crowns of gold upon their heads: and before it hung ſeven lamps of fire, which are the ſeven ſpirits of God. The ſpace around it, had the appearance of a ſea of cryſtal. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

As I viewed the throne more attentively, I ſaw it was ornamented with four animal forms; all endowed with life. The firſt had the reſemblance of a lion; the ſecond, of an ox; the third had a human face; and the fourth the appearance of an eagle. Each 7.

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1. This ſecond viſion repreſents *the things, which ſhall be hereafter.* (See chap. i. 19) The *door in heaven*, and the trumpet, allude to the opening of the gates of the temple, and calling the Levites to their office.

6. The ſea of glaſs is an image taken from the brazen laver in Solomon's temple.

6. I think the words in the original, εν μεσω τȣ θρονȣ, και κυκλω τȣ θρονȣ will bear this ſenſe. But I am the more diffident, as I have no where met with it. But it certainly adds much to the dignity of the throne, to ſuppoſe, that it's very ornaments are living forms; and have their appointed ſervices. But chiefly it takes from the groſſneſs of the idea in ſuppoſing four beaſts mixed with the four and twenty elders.

7. Mr. Mede diſcovers from the Jewiſh rabbins, that theſe four beaſts were the four enſigns of Iſrael, when the twelve tribes were marſhalled into four companies. Judah led the firſt, under the ſtandard of a lion; Ephraim the ſecond, under that of an ox; Reuben the third, under a man; and Dan the fourth, under an eagle.—Others think there is no foundation for this (ſee Mr. Lowman) but that they rather have alluſion to the cherubims in the temple.—Others again ſuppoſe, they repreſented the various gifts, with which God endows his miniſters. One has more fortitude; a ſecond more gentleneſs; a third more wiſdom; and a fourth more penetration.—It is plain they allude to the viſion of Ezekiel i. 10.

8. was covered with ſix wings; and was full of eyes in every part; and all together joined in a chorus of praiſe to God; Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty; who was; and is; and is to come.

9. Immediately on this chorus of praiſe from the ſeveral parts of
10. the throne, the four and twenty elders aroſe from their ſeats; and
11. proſtrated themſelves before him, that ſat on the throne, caſting their crowns before him, and ſaying, Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou haſt created all things; and through thy power they are all preſerved.

CHAP. V.

I then ſaw in the hand of Him that ſat upon the throne, a book
1. 2. ſealed with ſeven ſeals: and I heard an angel aſk with a loud voice,
3. 4. Who is able to open the book? But no one appeared. Then I
5. wept. On this one of the elders ſaid, Weep not, behold the Lion
6. of the houſe of Judah ſhall looſe the ſeals, and open the book.—And as I looked, behold a lamb ſtood before the throne, pierced, and bloody, as if it had been ſlaughtered. It had ſeven horns, and ſeven eyes; which are the ſeven ſpirits of God, ſent out to miniſter
7. 8. on the earth. He then took the book; and as he took it the living forms, which incircled the throne; and the elders having harps in their hands, and golden vials, full of perfumes, which are the
9. prayers of ſaints, fell down before the Lamb; praiſing, and ſinging; Worthy art thou to open the ſeals; for thou haſt redeemed all
10. the nations of the earth by thy blood; and given us the bleſſings
11. of thy favoured people.——This chorus was joined by myriads
12. of angels, ſinging, Worthy is the Lamb, that was ſlain, to receive

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1. This book Mr. Mede calls the *codex fatidicus*—the book of the counſels of God. It is ſealed with ſeven ſeals to ſhew that it's contents are ſecret.

5. Chriſt is called the *Lion of the houſe of Judah*, in alluſion to Jacob's prophecy. Gen. xlix. 9.

6. *Horns*, and *eyes* are the uſual ſymbols of power, and wiſdom.

8. The vials were a ſort of cenſers, in alluſion to the cenſers uſed in the temple-ſervice.

power,

power, and honour, and glory.——And this again was joined by 13.
the whole animate creation, crying, Honour, glory, and power
be unto Him that ſitteth on the throne; and to the Lamb for ever
and ever.——Then the four living forms, that circled the throne, 14.
cried, Amen; while the four and twenty elders fell down, and
worſhipped him, that liveth for ever.

CHAP. VI.

Then the Lamb opened one of the ſeals; and one of the living
forms, that circled the throne, cried with a loud voice, Come and
ſee. On this, I ſaw portrayed in the book, a white horſe, and he 1. 2.
that rode upon him, had a crown on his head, and a bow in his
hand; and he went out to conquer.——He then opened the ſecond 3.
ſeal; when another of the living forms that circled the throne,
called to me in like manner, Come, and ſee. Then I ſaw portrayed 4.
a red horſe; and he that rode him, appeared brandiſhing a ſword;
and frighted peace from the earth.——He then opened the third 5.
ſeal; and another of the living forms called to me again. I then
ſaw on the open page a black horſe; and he, who rode him had
a balance in his hand. And I heard a voice from the living forms 6.
around the throne, A meaſure of wheat for a penny—but ſee
that thou injure not the oil, and the wine.——He then opened 7.
the fourth ſeal; and I was again called, as before: when I beheld 8.
a pale horſe; and he that ſat on him was Death. Deſtruction
followed hard behind; and power was given him to deſtroy a fourth
part of the earth.——The fifth ſeal was then opened. In that 9.
page I ſaw an altar portrayed, and under it the ſouls of thoſe,
who had ſuffered death in teſtimony to the truth; and they cried,
Holy Lord God, when wilt thou call us, and our enemies before 10.

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6. *A meaſure of wheat for a penny.* This ſeems meant to deſcribe a time of great ſcarcity. A penny was about 7d. of our money; and was the price of a day's labour. And the meaſure here ſpoken of, is ſuppoſed to be a ſlave's allowance for a day. The ſcarcity therefore muſt be great, when a man's labour could merely ſupply himſelf with food, and that only bread.

11. thee in judgment? Then white robes were given them; and they were ordered to reſt, till the number of their brethren was com-
12. pleated.——After this, the ſixth ſeal was opened: and I ſaw the earth rent as by an earthquake. The ſun was darkened; and the
13. moon red as blood. The ſtars dropped from heaven, like the
14. decayed fruit of a fig-tree. The heavens were rolled up like a
15. ſcroll of parchment. The earth was rent; and all the inhabitants
16. in diſmay, hid themſelves in caverns, calling to the rocks and mountains to cover them, and preſerve them from the wrath of
17. Him, that ſat on the throne; and from the Lamb; the day of
CHAP. VII. whoſe irreſiſtable diſpleaſure was now fully come. And as I looked,
1. 2. I ſaw four angels ſtanding at the four corners of the earth; and reſtraining the four winds, that they might not rage againſt it. And I ſaw another angel aſcending from the eaſt, with the ſeal of God in his hand; and he cried to the four angels; Hurt not
3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. the earth, nor any thing in it, till we have ſealed the ſervants of God. And there were ſealed one hundred and forty-four thouſand from the twelve tribes of Iſrael; twelve thouſand from each tribe. After this I ſaw an innumerable multitude of people gathered from
10. all nations ſtanding before the throne, and before the Lamb. They were cloathed in white robes, and held palm-branches in their hands; and joined in a ſong of praiſe, Salvation be aſcribed to
11. God, who ſitteth upon the throne; and likewiſe to the Lamb. And all the company of heaven joined them, falling on their faces
12. before the throne; and worſhipping God ſaying, Amen! Glory, thankſgiving, and honour be aſcribed to God for ever, and ever,
13. Amen! Then one of the elders aſked me, if I knew who they
14. were, that were thus cloathed in white? I deſired him to inform me. They are ſuch, ſaid he, as have been purified by affliction; and have waſhed their robes, and whitened them in the blood of
15. the Lamb. Now they are advanced to the preſence of God; and

ſerve

ſerve him day, and night; and enjoy his divine communication.
They are now removed from all their afflictions. All tears are 16.
wiped from their eyes; and they ſhall drink of the fountain of 17.
living water.——After this, the ſeventh ſeal was opened: and CHAP. VIII.
there was ſilence in heaven for half an hour. Then ſeven angels
ſtood before God, into whoſe hands were put ſeven trumpets. And 1. 2.
I ſaw a golden altar ſtanding before the throne; at which ſtood 3.
another angel, with a golden cenſer in his hand; into which he
put incenſe, that he might preſent it on the golden altar, together
with the prayers of the ſaints; which were carried up, in the ſmoke 4.
of the incenſe, to the throne of God. The angel then filled the 5.
cenſer with fire from the altar, and ſcattered it over the earth.
Thunders, and lightenings followed, and a great earthquake. Then 6.
the ſeven angels, who held the trumpets, prepared to ſound.

The firſt angel ſounded; and a ſtorm of hail, and fire, mingled 7.
with blood, fell on the earth, and deſtroyed a third part of it's fruits.
——The ſecond angel ſounded; and I ſaw a vaſt ball of fire, 8.
like a burning mountain, thrown into the ſea; and it changed
a third part of it's waters into blood; and deſtroyed a third 9.
part of the ſhips, and a third part of the inhabitants of the
deep.——The third angel ſounded; and I ſaw a flaming ſtar, 10.
like a torch, fall on the third part of the rivers, and fountains.
It poiſoned all the fiſh; and deſtroyed all, who drank of the 11.
waters.——On the ſounding of the fourth angel, a third part of 12.
the ſun was darkened; a third of the moon, and a third of the
ſtars. Night and day loſt each a third of it's light. And I 13.

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1. *The ſilence in heaven* is an alluſion to a beautiful cuſtom in the Jewiſh worſhip. When the prieſt went into the temple to burn incenſe, all the inſtruments, which united in grand chorus before, made a ſolemn pauſe. During this interval the prieſt offered up his propitiatory devotion within the temple; while the people ſtood praying in ſilence without.

ſaw.

CHAP. IX.

1. saw an angel flying through the copes of heaven, and crying three times, with a loud voice, Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the wrath, that is preparing against them!——Then the fifth trumpet sounded; and I saw an angel falling, like a
2. bright star from heaven, in his hand he bore a key, with which he opened the bottomless pit; and the smoke burst forth, like
5–12. the smoke of a furnace; and darkened the light of heaven. In the smoke ascended locusts innumerable: and as they ascended, they changed their forms, and like horses prepared for war, became covered with mail. They had human faces with dishevelled hair, and teeth like lions; they had crowns on their heads, and seemed as if they wore breast-plates of iron. They had tails like scorpions full of deadly stings. They followed a leader, the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name is Apollyon; and when they moved, the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, or of horses rushing to battle. But they had power to hurt only those, who had not the seal of God upon them. They had not power to kill; but only to torment: and this power was limited to the space of five months. And to avoid the torments they inflicted, men
13. wished for death; but could not find it.——After this, the sixth angel sounded his trumpet; and I heard a voice from the
14. golden altar, that stood before the throne of God, crying, Loose
15. the four angels, who are bound near the river Euphrates. And the angels were loosed; and allowed for an hour, a day, a month,
16. and a year, to destroy a third part of the human race. And
17. their armies were myriads of myriads. They wore breast plates of fire; and rode on horses fierce and terrible, which breathed
18. 19. flame from their nostrils. They had tails like serpents; and
20. 21. they destroyed a third part of the human race. Yet still the

CHAP. X.

remainder of the sons of men repented not of their idolatries,
1. and their crimes. After this an angel descended from heaven, inthroned

inthroned in a reſplendent cloud. His countenance ſhone like
the ſun. His feet were like pillars of fire; and a bright rain-
bow circled his head. He held a ſmall open book in his 2.
hand; and ſet his right foot on the ſea, and his left foot on
the earth. Then he cried with a very loud voice; which was 3.
anſwered with thunder. I was preparing to write what I heard; 4.
when I was ordered to ſeal up what the thunder had ſpoken;
and not to write it. Then the angel that ſtood upon the ſea, 5.
and on the earth, lifting up his hand, to heaven, ſwore by the 6.
almighty Creator of all things, that time ſhould be no more;
and that after the ſeventh angel had ſounded, the myſtery of 7.
God ſhould be finiſhed, as he had declared by his ſervants. I 8.
was then ordered to take the ſmall book that was in the hand of the
angel, and to eat it. It would be ſweet, I was told, to the 9.
palate; but bitter to the ſtomach. I did accordingly, and felt, 10.
as had been deſcribed. Then ſaid the angel to me, Thou muſt CHAP. XI.
propheſy before people, and nations, and kings. A meaſuring-
rod was alſo put into my hand; and the angel ſaid, Meaſure 1.
the temple of God; meaſure the altar, and number the wor-
ſhippers. But meaſure not the outward court: for it belongeth 2.
to the gentiles. And they ſhall trample on the holy city forty 3.
and two months. And my two witneſſes, cloathed in ſack-cloth,
ſhall be appointed to propheſy a thouſand, two hundred, and ſixty

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9. Alluding to Ezek. ii. 8—and iii. 33. Eating a book, in the prophetic language, ſignifies reading it, and meditating on it. It was *ſweet* to receive a revelation from God; but as it contained his judgments againſt the wicked, it was attended with *bitterneſs*.

1. Alluding to Ezek. xl. 3.

3. There is great difficulty with regard to the two witneſſes. The moſt probable interpretation, I think, is, that no two particular perſons are ſignified, but all, who teſtified the truth, during this period: and the number too may be uſed in alluſion to the two witneſſes, which the law demanded. We obſerve, every where, in this book an alluſion to Jewiſh cuſtoms.

days.

4. days. Theſe are the two olive-trees; and the two candleſticks,
5. that ſtand before God. The fire of their mouths ſhall deſtroy
all, who oppoſe them. Even he, who but deſireth to injure them,
6. ſhall ſuffer. Theſe witneſſes have power to ſhut the heavens, ſo
that no rain ſhall fall, during their prophecy. They have power
to turn the ſea into blood, and ſmite the earth with plagues. And
7. when they ſhall have finiſhed their teſtimony, the beaſt, that aſ-
cendeth from the abyſs, ſhall make war upon them; and over-
8. come them. And their dead bodies ſhall fall in the ſtreets of the
great city, ſpiritually called Sodom, where Jeſus was crucified.
9. And various people of different nations ſhall ſee their dead bodies
three days, and an half, and ſhall not ſuffer them to be buried.
10. And the inhabitants of the earth ſhall triumph over them; and
congratulate each other, on the death of thoſe, who had rouſed
11. them from the ſlumber of guilt. But after three days, and an
half, they were reſtored to life; and great fear fell on all, who
12. ſaw them. And a voice from heaven called to them, ſaying, Come
up hither; and they aſcended in a cloud, as their enemies ſtood
13. beholding them. Then followed a dreadful earthquake, which
overturned a tenth part of the city; and ſeven thouſand men were
deſtroyed. The reſt were frighted into a dependence on God.
14. 15. The ſecond woe is paſt, the third woe approacheth.——Then the
ſeventh angel ſounded his trumpet; and various voices were heard
in heaven, ſinging aloud, The kingdoms of the earth are be-
come the kingdoms of heaven. The Lord ſhall reign, and his
16. anointed, for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders,
who ſat before God, fell on their faces, and worſhipped, ſaying,
17. We give thee thanks, O Lord God, eternal, and almighty, who

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4. Here is a plain alluſion to Zachariah's viſion (iv. 3, 11, 14).—By the fire which proceeded out of the mouth of the witneſſes, ſeems to be meant their great power in preaching the word of God.

now

now appeareth in all thy power and glory. Now ſhall the earth 18.
be judged; now ſhall the wicked be puniſhed; and thy righteous
ſervants be rewarded.

And I ſaw the temple of God; and the ark of the covenant 19.
ſtanding in the temple: and I heard thunder, accompanied with CHAP. XII.
lightning, and an earthquake, and various voices. And I ſaw a
wonderful appearance—a woman, as it were, inveſted with the 1.
ſun, and ſtanding on the moon; having her head incircled by a
crown, compoſed of twelve ſtars. And being with child, ſhe cried 2.
out in travel. And I ſaw a fiery dragon, with ſeven heads, and 3.
ten horns. On each head he wore a crown; and with his tail he 4.
ſwept away a third part of the ſtars of heaven; and threw them
to the ground. And he ſtood before the woman ready to devour
the child, that ſhould be brought forth. A male-child was born: 5.
and being deſtined to rule all nations with a rod of iron, it was
caught up, and carried to the throne of God: while the woman 6.
fled into the wilderneſs, where a place of refuge was provided for
her, during a thouſand, two hundred, and ſixty days.

Then followed war in heaven: Michael, and his angels fought 7.
againſt the fiery dragon; and prevailed over him; and his place 8.
in heaven was no longer found. The great dragon was caſt out; 9.
called the devil, and Satan; who deceived the world; and his
angels were caſt out with him. Then I heard a loud voice in 10.
heaven, crying out, Now is ſalvation come; the power, and
authority of God; and the reign of Chriſt: for the accuſer of the
righteous before the throne of God, is now caſt down. He is 11.
overcome by the blood of the Lamb; and the teſtimony of thoſe,
who have laid down their lives for the truth. Therefore rejoice, 12.

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5. Alluding to the prediction of Chriſt. Pſ. ii. 9. Thou ſhalt bruiſe them with a rod of iron.

ye heavens, and all that inhabit them. But woe to the world: for the devil is come down in great rage, knowing that his time is ſhort.

13. Now when the dragon found that an end was put to his con-
14. tention in heaven, he perſecuted the woman upon earth. But the woman had wings given her; ſo ſhe avoided his purſuit for a
15. *time*, and *times*, and *half a time*. And when in his power he threw after her a violent ſtream of water, hoping to carry her
16. away in the flood; the earth aſſiſted the woman, and opening it's mouth, ſwallowed up the flood, before it reached the woman.
17. Then the dragon being inraged gave up the purſuit; and made war upon the ſeed of the woman; that is, upon all, who keep the commandments of God, and bear teſtimony to Chriſt.

CHAP. XIII.

1. And as I ſtood upon the ſhore, I ſaw a beaſt ariſe out of the ſea, with ſeven heads, and ten horns. And on each horn was a crown; and on each head ſome blaſphemous name was written.
2. In form he was like a leopard; but his feet were like the feet of a bear; and his mouth like that of a lion. To him the dragon
3. gave up all his power, and authority. And as I looked, one of his heads appeared to be greatly wounded; but this wound was
4. healed.—Then all the earth reverenced the beaſt; worſhipping both him, and the dragon, from whom he received his power; ſaying, Who is equal to the beaſt? Who is able to contend with him?—
5. 6. 7. And he was permitted to ſpeak blaſphemy againſt God; and to make war upon his ſaints for the ſpace of forty years, and two
8. months. So that all the world went after him; except thoſe, whoſe names were written in the book of life by the Lamb, which
9. was ſlain from the foundation of the world. And now let all men
10. attend. A concluſion ſhall ſoon be put to this violence, and iniquity; and the faith, and patience of the ſaints ſhall finally prevail.

Then

Then I ſaw another beaſt ariſe out of the earth; which had the 11.
horns of a lamb; but the violence of a dragon. He ſeemed, as it 12.
were, to exerciſe authority under the firſt beaſt; whoſe wound
was healed; and whom he obliged all the inhabitants of the earth
to worſhip. And he made pretences to great ſigns, and wonders; 13.
calling fire from heaven in the ſight of men. He obliged alſo 14.
the inhabitants of the earth to make an image of the beaſt; and 15.
was permitted to give life to it. He ſet it up alſo to be worſhipped;
and he made all his worſhippers to receive a mark on their right- 16. 17.
hand, and on their foreheads—the name of the beaſt, and his num-
ber; without which no man was permitted to buy, or ſell. It 18.
is a matter of wiſdom and underſtanding to compute the number
of the beaſt; and it is to be computed in an human manner.
The number is ſix hundred and ſixty-ſix.

CHAP. XIV.

And I beheld a Lamb ſtanding on mount Sion; and around him 1.
ſtood one hundred and forty-four thouſand people; all of whom
had the name of God written on their foreheads. And I heard 2.
voices from heaven loud as thunder; yet ſweet as the ſound of falling
waters, accompanied with inſtruments of muſic. And they ſang 3.

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18. It was common in the eaſtern languages to expreſs things by enigmatical numbers. We have here a celebrated inſtance of this mode of expreſſion in the *number of the beaſt*; which hath given occaſion to a great variety of calculations, and explanations. In the Greek language this number is found in the numerical letters of the word LATEINOS; which the proteſtant does not ſcruple to affix on the Roman church; as it *latinizes* in every thing—in it's prayers, bulls, decretals, and uſe of ſcripture: and the authority of Irenæus, who lived in the firſt century, is given for this explication; tho in fact Irenæus is not ſatisfied with his own explication, but mentions it only as a conjecture. Others have found the ſame numerical letters in other names. A late writer, finding it to his purpoſe to make the French king, inſtead of the pope, the apocalyptic beaſt, finds them in the word LVDOVICVS. See Vivian's Explic. of the Rev.

Others again do not look for the enigmatical number in a name; but conſider it as a date; and computing from the viſion, find ſix hundred and ſixty-ſix years nearly about the time of inveſting the biſhop of Rome with temporal power.

before the throne of God; but none could join them, except the
4. one hundred and forty-four thouſand, who had been redeemed from
the earth. Theſe are they, who have never been ſeduced into
5. idolatry; but have followed the Lamb. In them no guile hath
been found: they are blameleſs in the ſight of God.

6. And I ſaw an angel flying through the midſt of heaven, having
the everlaſting goſpel in his hand; which was open to every nation;
7. and he cried with a loud voice, Fear God, and glorify his name;
for the time of judgment is come. Worſhip Him, that made
heaven, and earth, and all therein.

8. And another angel followed, crying, Babylon the great is fallen—
9. is fallen; becauſe ſhe made the nations of the earth drunk with
the wine of her fornications.

10. And a third angel followed crying, If any one worſhip the beaſt,
or receive his mark, he ſhall drink of the wine of God's indignation,
poured without mixture from the cup of his wrath: and he ſhall
11. be tormented with fire: and the ſmoke of his torment ſhall aſcend
for ever; and he ſhall neither have reſt by day, nor by night.

12. Then ſhall follow the happy reſt of the ſaints; thoſe, who have
13. kept the commandments of God, and the faith of Chriſt. And I
heard a voice from heaven ſaying, Write, bleſſed are the dead,
who die in the Lord. Now, ſaith the Spirit, they reſt from their
labours; and meet the reward of their works.

14. And I ſaw an angel ſitting in a white cloud, with a golden crown
15. on his head; and a ſharp ſickle in his hand. And another angel
came out of the temple, crying to him, Put in thy ſickle, and
16. reap: for the time is come—the harveſt of the earth is ripe.—Then
he, who ſat upon the cloud, put in his ſickle; and the earth was
reaped.

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8. Alluding to Iſaiah xxi. 9.

And

And another angel, with a ſickle in his hand, flew from the 17.
temple, and a fourth angel that came from the altar, called to him, 18.
and ſaid, Put in thy ſickle, and gather the grapes of the earth;
for they are ripe.——And the angel put forth his ſickle, and 19.
gathered the grapes of the earth; and threw them into the wine-
preſs of the wrath of God: and the wine-preſs was trodden; and 20.
the blood reached even to the horſes bridles; through the ſpace of
a thouſand ſix hundred furlongs.

And I ſaw another wonderful appearance in heaven—ſeven angels, CHAP. XV.
having the ſeven laſt plagues, which finiſhed the wrath of God on
the wickedneſs of man.——A vaſt plain was ſtretched before the 1. 2.
eye, which had the appearance of molten glaſs; and on it were
aſſembled all thoſe, who had gained a victory over the beaſt; and
had eſcaped the pollutions of the world. With harps in their hands,
they celebrated the praiſes of God; and ſang the ſong of Moſes, the 3.
ſervant of the Lord; and the ſong of the Lamb, ſaying, Great,
and glorious are thy works, O Lord almighty. Juſt, and true
are all thy ways, O king of ſaints. Let the whole earth, O Lord,
glorify thy name: for thou only art holy. Let all the nations of 4.
the earth glorify thee: for thy righteous judgments are manifeſt to
all.

After this hymn of praiſe, the Holy of Holies was thrown open, 5.
and ſeven angels came out of the temple, cloathed in pure white, 6.
with golden girdles around their breaſts. They had in their hands 7.
ſeven golden vials, filled with the wrath of God. In the mean
time the glory of the Lord, ſkreened in dark clouds, took poſſeſſion CHAP. XVI.
of the temple, ſo that no one could enter it, till the vials were
poured out. Then I heard a voice from the temple, calling to the 1.
angels to pour out their vials.

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20. This bold image ſeems to expreſs great ſlaughter.—But Bowyer conjectures, that inſtead of χαλινων, the true reading ſhould be χηλων; the blood came up to the hoofs of the horſes.

The

2. The firſt angel poured out his vial over the earth; and a grievous
ulcer was inflicted on all, that had the mark of the beaſt.——The
3. ſecond angel poured out his vial on the ſea; and it's waters became
4. blood; and all it's inhabitants died.——The third angel poured out
his vial over the rivers, and fountains; and they alſo became blood.
5. And as he emptied his vial, he cried, Righteous art thou, O Lord,
6. who haſt ordered all theſe things in judgment. They have ſhed
the blood of thy ſaints; and thou haſt given them blood to drink.
7. And I heard another angel cry from the altar, True and juſt, O
8. Lord, are all thy judgments.—The fourth angel poured out his
9. vial on the ſun; and it's burning heat ſcorched the inhabitants of
the earth; and they blaſphemed the name of God: but they were
10. not led by theſe plagues to repentance.—The fifth angel poured
out his vial upon the ſeat of the beaſt; and his kingdom was
darkened; and horrible pain ſeized it's inhabitants; and they
11. wreathed themſelves in their miſery, and blaſphemed God; but
12. repented not of their ſins.——The ſixth angel poured out his vial
upon the river Euphrates: and it's waters were dried up; and a way
13. was opened for the kings of the eaſt. And I ſaw ſeven unclean
ſpirits, like frogs, iſſue from the mouth of the dragon, and from
the mouth of the beaſt, and from the mouth of the falſe prophets.
14. They are the ſpirits of demons, working lying miracles, to bring
the kings of the earth together to the battle of the great day of
15. God Almighty. Behold, ſaith the Lord, I come ſuddenly. Bleſſed
16. is he, that keepeth himſelf from the pollutions of the world. Then
17. the armies of the earth were gathered together at Armagiddon.—The
laſt angel poured out his vial into the air: and I heard a voice from
18. the temple, and throne of God, crying, It is finiſhed. Then fol-

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12. It is ſuppoſed by ſome interpreters, that the vials allude to the ſame periods, as the trumpets. On the ſounding of the ſixth trumpet, the angels were looſed from the Euphrates. On the pouring out of the ſixth vial, the Euphrates is dried up.

lowed

lowed voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and a great earthquake, ſuch as had never been known, ſince the creation of the world. 19. And the great city of Babylon was rent in three parts; and drank fully of the cup of the wrath of God. The mountains diſappeared 20. from the land; and the iſlands from the ſea; and hail-ſtones of a 21. talent weight, were poured from heaven upon mankind: yet ſtill their wickedneſs continued, and they blaſphemed the holy God.

CHAP. XVII. And one of the ſeven angels, which poured out the vials, ſaid unto me, Come hither, and I will ſhew thee what judgments ſhall be paſſed on the great harlot, who ſitteth on many waters; who 1. 2. hath committed whoredom with the kings of the earth; and hath intoxicated the nations with the wine of pollution. And he tranſ- 3. ported me in the ſpirit into the wilderneſs. There I ſaw a woman ſitting on a ſcarlet-coloured beaſt, inſcribed all over with blaſphemous names; having ſeven heads, and ten horns. She was arrayed 4. in ſcarlet, and purple; and adorned with gold, and pearls, and precious ſtones; and held a golden cup in her hand, filled with the abomination of her corruptions. On her forehead was inſcribed, 5. *Myſtery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and of the abominations of the earth:* and ſhe was drunk with the blood of ſaints and 6. martyrs.

I was aſtoniſhed at the ſight, and the angel aſked me, Why I 7. wondered? I will explain to thee, ſaid he, the myſtery of the woman; and of the beaſt, that carries her, which hath ſeven heads, and ten horns. The beaſt thou ſaweſt, was; and is not. It 8. aſcended from the bottomleſs pit; and ſhall deſcend into it again: and the inhabitants of the earth, whoſe names are not written in

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3. Whoever has ſeen the pope, and cardinals ride on mules, covered almoſt over with ſcarlet-cloth, cannot but be put in mind of the woman riding on a ſcarlet-coloured beaſt.—Not that I ſuppoſe the prophet alludes to ſo trifling a circumſtance; in which there is in fact no immorality: yet the thing is ſingular.

the

9. the book of life, ſhall gaze after it, and wonder.—But now attend
to the real meaning. The ſeven heads are ſeven mountains; on
10. which the woman ſitteth. There are alſo ſeven governments. Five
are aboliſhed—one is—another is not yet come; and when it cometh,
11. it ſhall continue but a ſhort time. The beaſt is the eighth; and
12. yet he was alſo one of the ſeven; and ſhall go into perdition. And
the ten horns, which thou ſaweſt, are ten kings. They have
received no kingdom as yet; but receive the power of kings, one
13. 14. hour, with the beaſt. They have all but one mind; and ſhall unite
in ſtrengthening the beaſt, making war upon the Lamb.—But the
Lamb ſhall overcome them: his power is above all; and his fol-
15. lowers are choſen and faithful. The waters, which thou ſaweſt,
16. where the whore ſitteth, are people, and nations: and the ten
17. horns of the beaſt ſhall attack the whore, and deſtroy her. For
God hath put into their hearts to fulfill his will; ſo they ſhall
18. ſtrengthen the beaſt, only till the time, which God hath appointed.
The woman, which thou ſaweſt, repreſents that great city, which
reigneth over the kings of the earth.

CHAP. XVIII.

After this, I ſaw another angel come down from heaven with
great power. The whole earth was enlightened with the ſplendor
1. 2. 3. of his preſence. And he cried with a loud voice, Babylon the
great is fallen—is fallen. She who had power to intoxicate the

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10. *They are ſeven kings. Five are fallen.* Theſe five ſpecies of government, which are fallen, are ſuppoſed to be *kings, conſuls, dictators, decemvire,* and *military tribunes.* How far interpreters may be right in this ſolution, is not eaſy to ſay: certain however it is, that both Livy, and Tacitus enumerate the different modes of Roman government, that prevailed before the emperors, exactly in this manner.——Romani ſub regibus primum, conſulibus deinde, ac dictatoribus, decemviriſque, ac tribunis conſularibus geſſere. Liv. VI. 1.

Urbem Romam a principio reges habuere. Libertatem, et conſulatum L. Brutus inſtituit. Dictaturæ ad tempus ſumebantur; neque decemviralis poteſtas ultra biennium; nec tribunorum militum conſulare jus diu valuit. Tac. An. lib. I.

nations

nations of the earth—to draw kings into whoredom—and to inrich the world with her merchandize—is now become the companion of devils, and the habitation of impurity.

And I heard another voice from heaven, crying, Come out 4.
of her, my people; and be not partakers of her ſins, that you may
not ſuffer through her crimes. For her ſins have reached unto 5.
heaven; and have now called down juſtice from the throne of
God. Now ſhe feels the retribution of all her crimes. The cup, 6.
that ſhe mixed for others, is returned doubly drugged to her own
lips. Her anguiſh, and diſtreſs now equal her pride, and luxury: 7.
and ſhe who ſaid in her heart, I ſit as a queen; I ſhall ſee no
ſorrow; hath, in one ſhort day, experienced an accumulation of 8.
every evil.

Then ſhall the kings of the earth, who wantoned in her 9.
hours of dalliance, bemoan her fate; when ſtanding afar off, 10.
they ſhall ſee the ſmoke aſcend from the fire that conſumes her.
Alas! alas! they cry, thou great city, in how ſhort a mo-
ment is thy deſtruction compleated!——Then alſo ſhall the mer- 11. 12. 13.
chants of the earth wail over her, crying Who ſhall now pur- 14. 15.
chaſe her rich metals, her precious ſpices, and her coſtly veſt-
ments. Alas! alas! She who was cloathed in purple, and ſcar- 16.
let, and fine linen, is now in a moment ſtripped of all her gorgeous
array; and all her wealth laid waſte.——Then ſhall the ſeamen, 17. 18. 19.
and all, who traffic in ſhips, when they ſee afar off the ſmoak
aſcending from her deſtruction, lament over her. Alas! alas!
that great city, which once employed ſo many ſhips, is now in one
moment become deſolate †.——But, O ye heavens, rejoice—ye 20.
holy apoſtles, and prophets—God hath revenged your cauſe.

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† Theſe lamentations over Babylon ſeem to be copied from the 26th and 27th chapters of Ezekiel.

21. Then I ſaw a mighty angel raiſe a mill-ſtone, and caſt it into the ſea, ſaying, Thus ſhall the great city of Babylon ſink; and
22. 23. her name ſhall be no more remembered. The voice of muſic, and dancing ſhall no more reſound within thy walls—The light of the candle ſhall diſappear—and the rejoicing of the marriage-feaſt no more be heard. The artiſt ſhall no more diſplay his curious works; nor the foreign merchant his rich ſtores. The ſound of induſtry, and labour ſhall ceaſe in thy ſtreet. The ſorceries, by which thou haſt deluded the nations, ſhall now be
24. aboliſhed; and the blood of the ſaints and prophets, who have been ſlain within thy walls, now call for vengeance.

CHAP. XIX.

1. After theſe things, I heard a loud voice in heaven crying, Hallelujah!—Salvation, honour, glory, and power be aſcribed to God!
2. 3. True, and juſt are all thy judgments. Thou haſt judged the great corrupter of the earth; and haſt avenged the blood of thy ſervants upon their wicked perſecutor; whoſe ſmoke aſcendeth for ever,
4. and ever.——Then all the hoſt of heaven fell down before God; and united in one voice of praiſe, Hallelujah!

5. 6. After a ſolemn pauſe, the voice of praiſe again began. It was loud, as diſtant thunder; yet ſweet as the fall of waters: Hallelujah—Hallelujah, the Lord Almighty reigneth. Praiſe him all
7. his ſervants.—Now exalt, and glorify his name: for the marriage
8. of the Lamb approacheth. His bride is ready. She is arrayed in pure white. Pure white expreſſes the righteouſneſs of the ſaints.

9. Then an angel ſaid to me, Theſe are the words of God: write the happineſs of them, who are invited to the marriage-ſupper of
10. the Lamb.——Then I fell at the feet of the angel to worſhip him, not knowing who he was. But he rebuked me, ſaying; Worſhip me not: I am thy fellow-ſervant; and equally with thee bear teſtimony to Jeſus. Worſhip God alone. Thy labours in the goſpel, and the Spirit of prophecy, unite together in bearing teſtimony to Jeſus.

After

After this I ſaw a glorious figure mounted on a white horſe. 11.
Faithfulneſs, and truth went before him; and in righteouſneſs
he went to war with the remnant of his enemies. His eyes ſhone 12. 13.
like flames of fire; and on his head he wore many crowns. His
veſture was dipped in blood. His name no man knew; but he
was called the *Word of God*. And the armies of heaven followed 14.
him, riding on white horſes; and cloathed in pure linen. Out 15.
of his mouth iſſued a ſharp ſword; with which he fought the
battles of the Lord. He ſmote the nations, and ruled them with
a rod of iron: he trod the wine-preſs of the wrath of God. On
his veſture was written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

And I ſaw an angel ſtanding in the ſun, who cried with a loud 17.
voice to all the birds of prey, that flew under the copes of heaven;
Gather yourſelves together to the banquet of the Lord. Ye ſhall 18.
eat the fleſh of kings, and mighty men; and devour the carcaſſes
of all their mighty hoſts.——And I ſaw the beaſt, and the kings 19.
of the earth, with their armies, gathered, to make war on him,
that rode on the white horſe. And the beaſt was taken; and the 20.
falſe prophets who had deceived with lying wonders; and they
were thrown alive into a lake of fire. The reſt were ſlain with 21.
the ſword of him, who rode upon the white horſe.——And I ſaw CHAP. XX.
an angel deſcend from heaven with the key of the bottomleſs pit
in one hand; and a maſſy chain in the other. And he ſeized the 1. 2.
dragon, the old ſerpent, the devil; and bound him in the bottom-
leſs pit; and ſhut him up, and ſet a ſeal upon him, during the 3.
ſpace of a thouſand years; that he may deceive the nations no more,

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18. This noble image was probably taken from Ezekiel (xxxix. 17). *Thus ſaith the Lord, ſpeak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beaſt of the field; Aſſemble yourſelves together, and come; gather yourſelves, on every ſide, to my ſacrifice—that ye may eat fleſh, and drink blood; even the fleſh of the mighty; and the blood of the princes of the earth.*

till that period end; and then he ſhall be looſed again for a little time.

4. Then I ſaw thrones placed, and judges ſitting on them in judgment: and I ſaw the ſouls of them, who had ſuffered for the teſtimony of Jeſus: they were appointed to reign with him a
5. thouſand years. But the reſt of the dead were not raiſed, till after the thouſand years were expired. This is the firſt reſurrection; and
6. happy are they who have a part in it. On them the ſecond death hath no power: but they ſhall be prieſts with God, and Chriſt;
7. and reign with him a thouſand years. At the end of that time ſhall
8. Satan be looſed again; and go forth to deceive the nations, from one end of the earth to the other. And Gog and Magog ſhall lead forth the armies of darkneſs, whoſe number is as the ſand of the
9. ſea. And they overſpread the face of the earth; and compaſſed round the camp of the ſaints, and the holy city. Then fire came
10. down from God, and deſtroyed them. And the devil was caſt into the lake of fire, where the beaſt and the falſe prophets were thrown; and there he was tormented for ever.

11. Then I ſaw a large, white throne, and an awful figure ſat upon it, from whoſe face the earth, and the heavens fled. And the
12. dead ſtood before God, and the books were opened. And the dead
13. were judged from the books, according to their works. The ſea gave up her dead; and death, and the grave reſigned all they had
14. ſubdued; and all were judged according to their works. Then
15. death, and the grave were caſt into the lake.——This is the ſecond death: and whoever were found, whoſe names were not written in the book of life, were caſt into the lake of fire.

CHAP. XXII.

1. Then I ſaw a new heaven, and a new earth; for the ſea, and
2. all the ſubſtance of the old world, had paſſed away. I ſaw the holy

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8. Gog, and Magog ſeem to allude to Ezekiel in the 38th, and 39th chapters.

city,

city, the new Jeruſalem, deſcending from heaven, prepared as a bride to meet her huſband. Then a voice from heaven proclaimed; 3.
Behold, the tabernacle of God is now with man. God himſelf will dwell on earth; he will be their God, and they ſhall be his people. He will wipe away tears from their eyes. Sorrow, and 4.
pain, and death, and every evil thing are now paſſed away. Then 5.
he, that ſat on the throne, ſaid; Behold I make all things new. Write theſe things. All is finiſhed. I am the firſt, and the laſt. 6.
From henceforth I give freely to the thirſty ſoul of the fountain of 7.
life: and thus will I be a father to him, who hath overcome the temptations of the world; and he ſhall be a ſon to me; while the 8.
wicked ſhall be caſt into the lake of fire; which is the ſecond death.

Then one of the angels, who had the ſeven vials, ſaid to me, 9.
Come up hither, and I will ſhew thee the bride of the Lamb.— 10.
As he ſaid this, he carried me to a lofty mountain, and ſhewed me the great city, the holy Jeruſalem, deſcending from heaven in the glory of God. The light, which ſpread around it, was like 11.
the ſparkling luſtre of a gem. It's walls were lofty, having twelve 12. 13.
gates; at each of which ſat an angel. Over it's gates, which were three on every ſide of the four walls of the city, were inſcribed the names of the twelve tribes of Iſrael: the wall had twelve foun- 14.
dations; on which were inſcribed the names of the twelve apoſtles of the Lamb.——Then the angel, who ſpoke to me, having a 15.
golden reed in his hand, meaſured the city, and it's walls. The 16.
city was ſquare; and meaſured twelve thouſand furlongs on the ſeveral ſides of the wall; which were one hundred and forty-four cubits high, according to the meaſure of a man. The walls were of jaſper; and the buildings of the city had the appearance of gold; but tranſparent like chryſtal. The walls were founded on precious ſtones of various kinds, twelve in number. The gates were of 21.

pearl;

pearl; and the ſtreets, like the buildings, of tranſparent gold.——
22. But I ſaw no temple. The preſence of God, and of the Lamb,
23. was the only temple. Nor was there any ſun, or moon. The
24. glory of the Lord was it's only light. In this glorious light ſhall
25. all nations walk, which inherit the ſalvation of God. It's gates
26. ſhall never be ſhut. Hither ſhall be brought whatever is great
27. and glorious upon earth. No pollution ſhall be found in it. They
only ſhall enter, whoſe names are written in the book of life.

CHAP. XXII.

Then the angel ſhewed me a pure river, clear as criſtal, iſſuing
1. 2. from the throne; and running through the midſt of the city; on
the banks of which ſtood the tree of life; which bore fruit every
month; and always of a different kind. The leaves of the tree
3. were health to the nations. No curſe can enter here. The throne
of God ſecures it; where all his ſervants worſhip him in peace.
4. They ſhall always ſtand before him; and his name ſhall be on
5. their foreheads. They have no occaſion for the ſun, nor any other
light; the Lord himſelf giveth them light; and they ſhall reign
for ever.

6. Then the angel declared the truth of all I had ſeen; aſſuring
me, that the ſame Lord, who had inſpired the holy prophets, had
7. ſent him to give me this revelation of his will. All theſe things,
he told me, ſhould ſpeedily come to paſs; and happy ſhould they
be, who paid a due attention to them.

8. Then I fell down at the feet of the angel, who ſhewed me theſe
9. things. But he rebuked me, ſaying; Forbear: I am thy fellow-
ſervant only; and one of the prophets, thy brethren, who obey
the commandments of God. Him only ſhalt thou worſhip.——
10. Then the angel ſaid; Seal not up the prophecies of this book.
11. The time approaches: yet let men have opportunity: let them
either continue in their ſins, if they are obſtinate; or, if they are
well-diſpoſed, let them have the means of leading holy, and godly
lives.

Behold,

Behold, I come quickly, ſaith the Lord; and bring my reward 12.
with me; and ſhall recompence every man, according to his work.
I am the Beginning, and the End: the Firſt, and the Laſt. Happy 13. 14.
are they, who obey my commandments; and gain acceſs to the
tree of life. They ſhall enter the gates of the city; from which 15.
all wickedneſs ſhall be excluded.

Thus (ſaid Jeſus to me in his own perſon) I have ſent my 16.
meſſenger to teſtify all theſe things to the churches. I am the
root, and the branch of David—the morning ſtar: and let all my 17.
holy ſervants wiſh for my coming; and deſire to drink of the
fountain of everlaſting life.

Let no one alter the things contained in this book. If any one 18.
add to it, God will lay the plagues contained in it on him. Or 19.
if any one diminiſh from it, God will take from him his part in
the book of life; and in the bleſſings contained in it. The com- 20.
pletion of *all* approaches.

Amen! bleſſed Jeſus, come as thou haſt promiſed!

The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you all. Amen! 21.

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18. Theſe words are ſo appoſite a concluſion to the whole *New Teſtament*; that ſome interpreters believe John meant it as ſuch. It is certainly an appoſite concluſion; but I find no ground for ſuch an opinion.

END OF THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN.

ERRATA.

Page.

1 for *women*, read *woman*—in a note.
29 for *effectual*, read *ineffectual*.
41 for πεξη, read πεζη—note.
86 for απηγζατο, read απηγξατο—note.
127 for *signifies*, read *signify*—note.
131 for πειραξων, read πειραζων—note.
142 for *Matt.* xv. 11, read *see a note on Matt.* xxvii. 39.
206 for αναγκαξω, read αναγκαζω—note.
214 for σωξω, read σωζω—note.
350 for *Heb.* i. 5, read *Hab.* i. 5.
435 for κορινθιαξειν, read κορινθιαζειν—note.
447 for *suborination*, read *subordination*.
454 for *their gifts*, read *his gifts*, and for *they*, read *he*—note.
472 for *live, and with*, read *live, and die with*.
557 for κρητιξειν, read κρητιζειν—note.
582 for *Cain's*, read *Cain's sacrifice*.
582 for πατριδα επιξητουσι, read πατριδα επιζητουσι—note.
609 for αγαπη εκτενες, read αγαπη εκτενης—note.